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ABSTRACT

This book is part of a series of case studies that demonstrate better ways to educate Ohio's students. The case study is part of the Transforming Learning Communities (TLC) Project, designed to support significant school-reform efforts among Ohio's elementary, middle, and high schools. This report discusses an innovative program at an elementary school in Cleveland, Ohio. The case study is presented as a vignette that describes the change process and the forces that sustained this process. It provides a history of the school and outlines a typical day. The text focuses on the leaders in the reform efforts and discusses the context of student learning and the influence of multiple intelligence theory, multi-age classroom structures, and community-service learning programming on change. Information on the context of adults working together and the role of the lead teacher, decision-making structures, and professional development are also described. A third context, the context of a wider network of stakeholders, is discussed, along with the external forces--neighborhood, community, and parents--that influenced change. The twists and turns that accompanied the change process are likewise explored. The last chapter describes the need to understand the tensions that accompany reform. Two appendices list the study methodology and an academic-achievement plan. (Contains 22 references.) (RJM)

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Different Routes In Similar Directions

The Case Study of Cranwood Learning Academy

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TRANSFORMING LEARNING COMMUNITIES

DIFFERENT ROUTES IN SIMILAR DIRECTIONS:

THE CASE STUDY OF CRANWOOD LEARNING ACADEMY

Prepared by:

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with

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Ohio Department of Education
Columbus, Ohio
1999

Dear Readers:

The 12 Transforming Learning Communities case studies enlighten readers about the search for better ways to educate Ohio's young people. The stories, told by educators themselves, paint a realistic picture of schools in Ohio.

The unique and inspirational perspectives of the school people highlight the triumphs of team spirit, the drive to turn obstacles into opportunities, and the effort to consider complex questions and find answers that lead to higher student achievement. These researchers tell stories of success and frustration in the endeavor to make life better for future generations.

At the core of educational change is a long-term commitment to teaching and learning that has the potential for creating positive change throughout society. The case studies emphasize intense, high-quality professional development; increased service to others; a holistic approach to education; the promotion of a sense of community; and a deepened understanding of the daily work in the classrooms, corridors, and boardrooms of public schools.

The educators at the heart of change encourage us to examine and refresh our views about schools. Sincere thanks is extended to the local educators, university researchers, and concerned citizens for their willingness to examine the lessons from the past, the realities of the present, and the likely consequences of change.

Sincerely,

Linda C. Nusbaum

Linda C. Nusbaum
Research Project Manager

Transforming Learning Communities Project

INTRODUCTION

The Transforming Learning Communities (TLC) Project was an initiative funded by the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) to support significant school reform efforts among Ohio's elementary, middle, and high schools. Education researchers associated with the International Centre for Educational Change at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto were contracted to undertake in-depth case studies of school improvement in a select number of schools supported by Ohio's Venture Capital grants. The aim was to understand the school improvement efforts in these schools, and to engage other Ohio educators in the lessons learned from these schools' experiences.

The project title communicates the orientation to the study. "Learning communities" is a metaphor for schools as learning places for everyone (especially students and teachers) who has a stake in the success of schools as educational environments. "Transforming" signifies that the schools are in a process of change, and that the changes they are striving to achieve involve fundamental reforms in teaching and learning, assessment, organization, professional development, and/or governance. Transforming also captures the intent of the project to support — not just to document — the process of change in participating schools.

The TLC Project began in the Spring of 1997. A three-stage process was used to identify and select schools that had demonstrated notable progress in their efforts to implement significant change over the preceding three to five years: (1) solicitation of nominations from ODE staff familiar with the Venture Capital schools, corroborating opinions from independent sources (e.g., Regional Professional Development Center staff), and statistical profiles for nominated schools (e.g., performance and demographic data); (2) telephone interviews with the principal of each nominated school; and (3) ranking of schools according to relevant sampling criteria. Twelve schools were chosen for variation in type (elementary, middle, secondary); location (rural, urban, and suburban from various regions in Ohio); focus for change (e.g., teaching and learning, professional growth, school-community partnerships); school improvement model; and evidence of progress.

The individual case studies were carried out during the 1997/98 school year by teams consisting of at least two members of the school staff and researchers from four Ohio universities that partnered with the schools. Each team designed and implemented a multi-method study of school improvement activities and outcomes in their school learning community. These included interviews, observations, surveys, and documents. While each case study reflected the unique character of school change at each school, the studies employed a common conceptual framework to guide their exploration and analysis of change in these school learning communities. The TLC framework oriented the case study teams to investigate change and change processes in multiple contexts — the classroom, the corridors, and the community — and in relation to three key processes of learning in organizations: collaboration, inquiry, and integration.

The major products of the Transforming Learning Communities Project include 12 individual case study monographs, a cross-case study and handbook, and a companion video at www.ode.ohio.gov.

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PROLOGUE

"I can't believe it! We really are going to do it!"

Late August is always the same. The heat is so bad that even the birds are staying put. Here we are on the first professional day of school only 10 days before the students walk through our doors. Everyone looks energized but a bit nervous. In the spring, we received notice that we had been accepted as a Venture Capital School and were going to receive $25,000 a year for five years to make changes that would positively affect the way kids learn. We wrote things into the plan like, "multi-age classrooms, connections to the community, apprenticeships, multiple-intelligence assessment." Everyone who went to the Key School and Notre Dame College to be trained in multiple-intelligences theory was excited.

Many of the teachers are grabbing for lemonade and donuts while questioning whether we are actually going to implement the things we promised to do. As I hear others talk and ask the same questions, I can sense the nervousness in their voices. Some of these people have been here for years and are close to retirement. Making a change in the way they teach and assess would be to ask a lot! For me, Tim Harry, it was no big deal because I was relatively new. But at least 70 percent of the staff had agreed last spring that the changes were needed.

The principal has just walked in; she's announcing the fresh changes and exciting news of our $25,000 grant. She's talking about the positive professional development we went through last summer. Some of us remember with smiles and think, *"I can't believe it! We really are going to do it!"* We know then that we are going to have an interesting year of changes.

This vignette was constructed to set the stage for the story of this Venture Capital school's change process. This volume tells how this opening scene came about, it describes the twists and turns of the ongoing change process, and it illuminates the forces that keep it going still. Its multiple facets come into focus through the voices of its characters as they recount their individual and collective experiences of change.

The Cranwood story is one of 12 change stories studied and told through the Transforming Learning Communities (TLC) project, a collaborative of the Ohio Department of Education and the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto (OISE/UT). Cranwood Learning Academy was chosen for the study because of its multiple indicators of high performance, including reg-

ular attendance of students, success on Ohio proficiency tests, and reduced referrals for special education classes. The case study was designed and conducted by a team of three Cranwood staff members — Tim Harry, community broker; Bev Veccia, lead teacher; Cheryl Trebec, classroom/Title I mathematics teacher — and by Jackie Peck, a literacy educator and researcher at Cleveland State University. Appendix A presents the case-study design and analysis methodology.

Chapter One

The Beginnings

Cranwood's Political History

Cranwood Learning Academy sits on a large piece of land in the southeast section of greater Cleveland in the suburb of Garfield Heights. If you drive around the school and see the single-family homes, you would likely think that this was a rather tranquil neighborhood, and for years it had been. Since the 1960s, many changes have occurred. Now, the immediate neighborhood surrounding the school is sustained by senior citizen residents who take great pride in the neighborhood of the past, but lock their doors and pull their curtains shut because of the problems that beset urban areas in the 1990s, such as increased transience and deterioration of homes and property.

But that is only part of the picture. Although located in Garfield Heights, Cranwood is one of the Cleveland public schools. When Cleveland was busing students to achieve court-ordered segregation, school board officials decided that parents in the Garfield Heights section of the Cranwood neighborhood would be exempt from busing and have a choice in where to send their children. This was mostly done to appease them because, in reality, they were Garfield Heights residents who paid Garfield Heights taxes but could not send their children to Garfield Heights schools. However, children living in the Cleveland portion of the Cranwood neighborhood were not given that choice.

The boundary between Cleveland and Garfield Heights is just three blocks away from the school, adding to the complexity of the school and local politics. The issue of this Cleveland school that is situated well within the Garfield Heights city limits has been in contention for many years. Three years ago, in 1995, the issue was presented before the Ohio Supreme Court, which ruled that Cranwood Learning Academy would remain one of the Cleveland Public Schools. This issue has affected the disposition of some older tax-paying residents and their relationship with the school; most of them want their children and grandchildren to attend a school funded by their immediate tax dollars, and further, they perceive the Garfield schools as more effective than the Cleveland public schools in their deliverance of quality education, at least at the elementary level.

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Today, Cranwood is a neighborhood school. Almost 70 percent of the students who attend Cranwood live in the neighborhood. The majority of the children attending Cranwood are African American, and a little over half the teachers and supporting staff are Caucasian. The poverty rate, based on free and reduced-fee lunches, is below the elementary school average in Cleveland of 86 percent, but still hovers at approximately 81 percent. The number of students from two-parent families is 27 percent. Most children who attend Cranwood actually reside in Cleveland; only 7 percent of the students live in Garfield Heights.

Ironically, once inside the school, one senses that the politics of the neighborhood are of no importance. The school houses 23 classrooms; the overall student-teacher ratio is 20:1. Children dress in standard uniforms of blue, black, gold, and white, with almost all wearing sneakers. The school has experienced major changes within the last five years; student and staff numbers have increased each year, and Cranwood has changed from a grade four to six gifted program, which has historically attracted some of Cleveland's more proficient students, to a straight kindergarten to grade 5 regular-curriculum status.

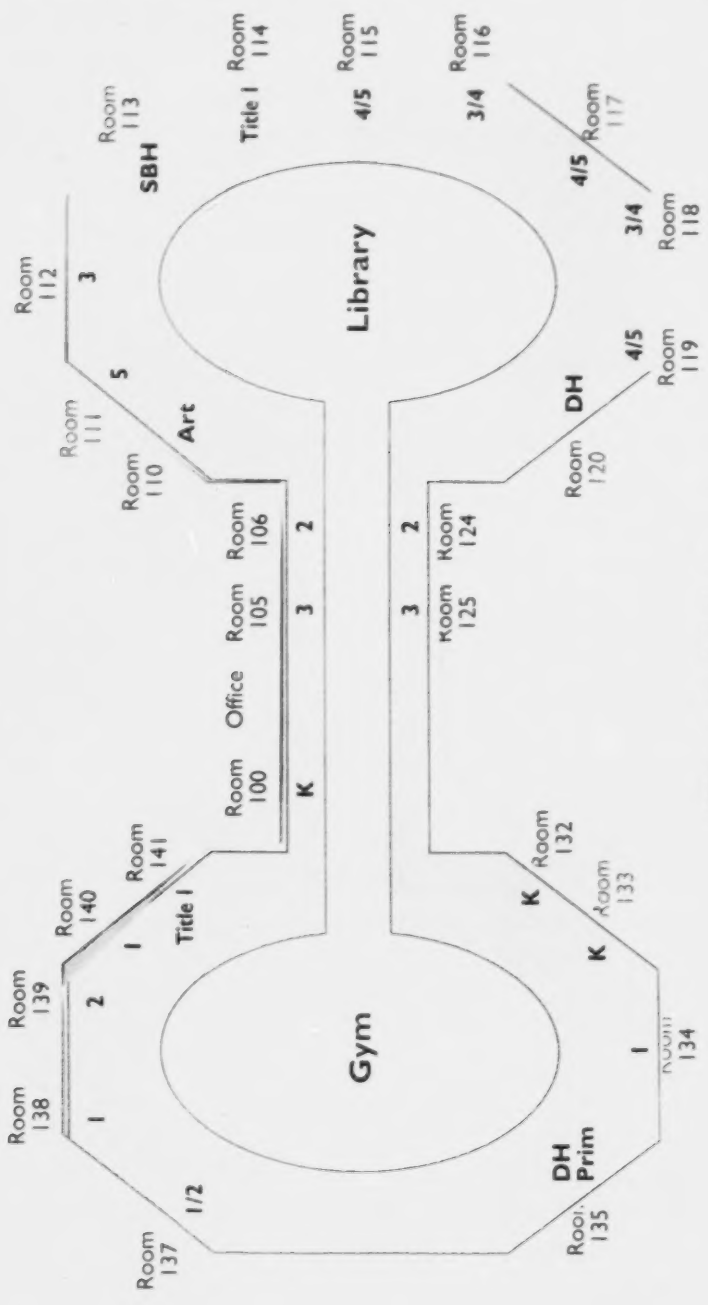
The single-story school was built in 1957. Two additions were built in 1961. The two rotunda areas that house the library and the gymnasium are connected by a lengthy center hallway that offers students, teachers, parents, and visitors long walks from one end of the building to the other (see Figure 1). The mascot of the school is the Cranwood Crusader; upon entering Cranwood, visitors are greeted by a sign and emblem reading, "Crusading for Excellence," with the silhouette of a medieval crusader attached.

Setting the Stage for Change

In 1993, an exciting new superintendent for Cleveland schools, Dr. Sammy Campbell Parrish, wanted to create community schools. She offered her insights and vision through a plan that would end busing of children across the wide city, offer parents choice of where to send their children, and bring a new community effort that would affect all people. She called this plan Vision 21. The idea was that each school staff, with input from members of the community, would choose a plan that best fit the way they believed children should be taught and assessed. Models such as Comer School Development Model, the Theory of Multiple Intelligences, Afro-centric, and performance-based assessment were offered as possibilities. Cranwood was one of the first schools chosen to submit a plan for Vision 21. Staff members from these schools were expected to attend evening meetings to learn what each model entailed. Cranwood participated, but the staff members struggled, because there were aspects of almost all plans that they liked. For example, in the Comer Model, the staff rallied over inclusion of the community as the intelligent way of teaching the whole child. The multiple-intelligences model sought a new way of teaching children and assessing their talents; the staff recognized the need to celebrate the seven intelligences that people displayed (Gardner, 1983). It only made sense that the staff thought the Afro-centric model should be highlighted because of the high percentage of African American children attending the school.

Figure 1

Classroom Floor Plan at Cranwood Learning Academy



SBH = severe behavior handicap

DH = developmentally handicapped

Title I = state-funded program providing extra help in reading and mathematics

Several rooms that are not classrooms are not shown.

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And so it went. Meetings intended to lead to a decision on one model only brought more discussion and sometimes dissension. Yet the teachers talked in the halls, the lunch room, the principal's office, and after school about what it was they wanted. Finally, one person mentioned the idea of retooling all the ideas and creating a new model — take all that they liked from all the models and fashion one unique to Cranwood. That is exactly what the Cranwood staff did. After two more weeks of discussion and drafting, The Learning Project was announced.

The Learning Project, Cranwood Learning Academy

integrated, thematic instruction
cooperative, multi-age groups
students remaining with a teacher for two or more years
supportive, information-rich environment
instruction centered around student strengths
bi-monthly assemblies featuring community members relating real-world experiences
Apprentice Program, Mentor Program, Magic Friends
After-School Extended-Day Program
intrinsic motivation encouraged with the elimination of grades, incentives, and awards

The Vision 21 plan provided two additional and distinctive staff positions — community broker and lead teacher. However, the funding from the Venture Capital Grant enabled the Cranwood teachers to incorporate aspects from multiple models of learning and teaching into a unique learning project for their students. Dorann Block, principal of Cranwood for 13 years explained, "The [school] board really had a set group of learning programs they wished us to pick from, and because of Venture Capital, we were the only ones [in the district] allowed to pick outside of that box." Venture Capital funding supported Cranwood's autonomy to embark on a transformation characterized by a unique blending of multiple programs.

Since 1996, the Cranwood staff has written an annual Academic Achievement Plan to guide the ongoing change process (see Appendix B). This plan provides for continued shaping and reshaping of The Learning Project through schoolwide goals and strategies determined by Cranwood faculty. As this story will show, Cranwood's collective autonomy is replicated through the different routes individuals chose to take as they moved to implement The Learning Project.

To portray the complexity of the Cranwood change story, we describe the actions of the with teachers, students, parents, and community through the "close-up" vignettes in Chapter 2. Then in Chapter 3, we step back to view the twists and turns of the change process over time. This chapter will bring together the numerous strategies used in The Learning Project over time within the contexts of classroom, corridors, and community. Finally, we position Cranwood's change story in the panoramic

landscape of school restructuring and transformation and consider various interpretations of its themes. But to help you, our reader, understand these chapters that follow, we first invite you to step through Cranwood's doors and experience a typical day.

A Typical Day at Cranwood Learning Academy

The Cranwood neighborhood children are gathered outside two doors of the school on this early April morning. Some are tossing a football in the large, grassy lot, while others talk to their friends in the line that leads to the free breakfast every child is given before the start of the day. A few vans, with emblems of various day-care centers on them, line the streets around the school. Other cars with children in them wait for the first bell at 9:40 a.m. which will mark the start of another day at Cranwood Learning Academy.

Inside, teachers are preparing for the burst of children when the doors swing open. Some teachers are positioned in the kindergarten eating area, called the literacy area because it is a wide-open space where children work together on center activities or engage in peer tutoring and partner reading when it is not being used for breakfast or lunch. Others are in room 131, a multipurpose room used for community and staff meetings, small-group instruction, and classroom theme displays, in addition to serving as the cafeteria for first-through-fifth-grade children. Many teachers collect in the office, signing in and running copies for daily assignments. Teachers check the calendar that has just been updated. This is "central control," and many teachers are writing down in their planners the various meetings that will take place this month. "Why are we having two staff meetings this month?" one teacher asks.

"Because we are trying to revise the Academic Achievement Plan," another teacher reminds her. This teacher is a sturdy and tough, yet very loving instructor named Tara Carter. She has become the union chairperson for Cranwood and has attempted to make certain that the union is well represented at the school. As she copies information for teachers on the coveted copy machine in the office, she is being deluged by others with a variety of union questions. She is one of the few African American teachers at Cranwood, and certainly one of the best teachers in the building.

Mrs. Carter has taken on the responsibility this year of engaging her fourth- and fifth-grade multiage class in a variety of community commitments that will extend her classroom instruction. She is feverishly preparing her students' assignments for the Apprentice Program at The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum. "I'd like to move my library time, if that is possible," she asks the librarian, "because my class is going to be at the Rock Hall the entire day each Thursday for the next eight weeks."

The librarian is concerned she may not have another slot open, but offers other suggestions. Then she asks, "Why are you going on a field trip for eight weeks to the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame?" Mrs. Carter explains:

It's not really a field trip. The children are going to act as apprentices to the staff members of the Rock Hall. They are with the same mentor each week. There is plenty of journaling we do together during lunch; then the children and I stay together during the afternoon using the exhibits as classroom extensions to what I am teaching. This first week we will simply explore, and I will explain that they are expected to complete a final project. Next week I have a geography lesson for them to complete while they explore the main hall exhibit.

The safety patrol, made up of mostly fifth graders, take their positions inside and outside the school, ready for another day to begin. On the south side of the building, a conspicuous group of young adults are engaged in an exercise routine; they are all dressed in the same red and white uniforms that sport the name "City Year." These 16 volunteers have been with the school the entire year. Nearly every morning, these ambitious young people do the "PT," otherwise known as physical therapy. According to the tenets of the Americorps volunteer organization that helps to sponsor City Year, getting the heart pumping in the morning helps the young people clear their minds. As they are exercising, they are encouraging the students to join them. Some do, but the children mostly look at these young heroes with a sense of awe. The children are surely enjoying themselves as they watch their City Year volunteer stretch, jump, and kick. Some children yell, *"Go, Jason. Come on, Sarah."* They are cheering their volunteer. Some teachers have now joined the exhibition of exercise, and the children are getting even more of a kick out of this assemblage. Finally, the morning bell rings, and in an instant, doors open on the day-care vans, cars, buses, and the school itself, and more than 500 children pour into the building.

Children begin the day in the classroom by starting morning board work. There is a considerable amount of movement of children around the building; this particular morning is no different from any other. Second and third graders are boarding buses ready to meet with their "Magic Friends," an intergenerational program at a local nursing home. They are politely holding themselves in line, because their teacher has explained that if they do not, the senior citizens will not think well of them; it is as though the children believe that the seniors can see them getting on the bus!

Third- and fourth-grade students are preparing their journals and sharpening their pencils as they get ready to go to a local insurance business. Megan O'Connor is a first-year teacher at Cranwood, and her children are part of the Mentor Program at Progressive Insurance. "Does everyone have their journal? Why not? Come on, you guys. You know the routine; you are to have your journals and the questions I gave you to ask your mentors." Ms. O'Connor tells two of the children to go back to the room and collect their journals.

"When is your class going to be back at school, Ms. O'Connor?" the gym teacher asks.

"We should be back around one o'clock," Ms. O'Connor tells her.

Scheduling is difficult to keep up with at Cranwood, because so many of the classrooms do community-service learning. Tim Harry, the community broker, who is responsible for creating, scheduling,

and maintaining these service learning programs, asks Ms. O'Connor if he can help with any last-minute details before they depart for Progressive Insurance.

Down the hall, Mrs. Carter is now coming out of the room with her students and a City Year volunteer; they are ready to go to the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum. We also see the Title I mathematics and reading instructors taking students back and forth down the hallway; the state-funded Title I program provides extra help in reading and mathematics for students who need it. As the teachers and students walk through the hallway, their conversation revolves around yesterday's lesson or the students' evening at home. Students seem to be confident in sharing with these special teachers.

Still other students are leaving their classrooms and joining Beverly Veccia, Cranwood's lead teacher, for a small-group proficiency-skill lesson in room 131. The Umbrella Committee, a schoolwide decision-making group of teachers representing each grade level and all the other building committees, decided that some students in fourth grade need a little extra encouragement in their studies. Mrs. Veccia is providing that support by teaching these students how to look for answers in text and generally how to be better students. As lead teacher, Mrs. Veccia also facilitates the multi-age groupings, sometimes called "nongraded" or "mixed age" (Greene, 1998), and multiple-intelligence curricula at Cranwood. In this role, she works closely with the principal, Mrs. Block, to help teachers carry out these tenets in their classrooms by providing resources and modeling instruction for rookies and veteran teachers alike.

Cranwood bustles with constant activity. The office is busy with incoming calls and parents bringing their children to school late. The secretary does her best to keep this under control. Because there is no intercom public-address system at the school, a steady stream of notes floats back and forth from the office to the various classrooms. A part-time lunch aide and parent volunteers help with this on a daily basis.

Across the hall in the community broker's room, two children have been brought in because they were fighting outside the school. Parent volunteers are painting the room and installing new furniture and carpet to create a parent resource center, so Mr. Harry and the children move to the adjacent multipurpose room, room 131. The two students who had been fighting sit and glare at one another as the community broker quietly goes over the conflict-mediation process with two fourth graders, a tall boy and a hearty girl, who have entered the room. They seem confident to try out their new skill of mediation so that the two second-grade boys may come to some sort of peace in their recent battle with one another. The fourth-grade girl begins: "Hi. My name is Tanya and I am a conflict manager. Would you like to settle your conflict?" Both the young boys agree as the community broker and the other conflict manager stand by and watch. Rules of mediation are given to the two boys, and one begins to tell his side of the story. As the process goes on, another note of a fight has been sent to Mr. Harry. The fourth-grade boy says he feels he can go to the room and settle the conflict there.

As noontime approaches, children from the intergenerational community-service learning program return to school. They are full of excitement as they leave the bus, and each one holds a hand-crafted papier-mâché vase with silk flowers inside. This is the craft their "Magic Friend" made for them. The children had each made one for their senior friend; they traded their own vase and flower for the one the older friend at the nursing home made. Their teacher, Laura Maruniak, tells them, "Go slowly and quietly through the hall and take your journals out when you get back to the classroom. We will do some reflective writing about our time with our 'Magic Friends' and then report out to one another." Since she is teaching about plant growth, the special project of making a papier-mâché vase and artificial flowers will not go unnoticed by Mrs. Maruniak. Carolina Martin, the consultant-artist, met with her in January to go over ideas to complement the science and social studies curricula. The students will later compare and contrast living plants with artificial ones. The idea is that students service the elderly by helping them with this flower pot craft. But then the idea extends to the classroom as students connect the service with the science curriculum of growing things.

The constant activity and movement intensifies during lunchtime at Cranwood. Dr. Jackie Peck, the university researcher working on the case study team, enters the building and engages in relaxed conversation with teachers walking their classes to and from the lunch room. "Have you seen Bev Veccia or Tim Harry?" she asks.

"I think Tim went down to the Rock Hall to work with Mrs. Carter and her class this afternoon, and Bev is helping in the lunch room," replies Cheryl Trebec, the Title I mathematics teacher who joined the case team in September.

"Thanks. I'll just leave copies of this case study memo for them and try to schedule some interviews with the teachers. Here's your copy, Cheryl. Maybe I'll see you later in the resource room." As Jackie passes by the lunch room, she sees Bev outfitted with gloves, collecting unopened items for recycling and helping the children clear their lunch trays, wipe tables, and mop up spills. Jackie smiles and waves to Bev and says, "I'll be down in the teacher resource room later!"

Lunchtime at Cranwood is indeed an invigorating experience! The students eat in three lunch periods of 40 minutes each with kindergarten, first, and multi-age first/second graders in the first period, second/third graders in the second period, and multi-age third/fourth and fourth/fifth graders in the third period. Lunch aides stationed in the eating areas supervise the children. Mrs. Block eats her lunch in room 131 to help provide "crowd control." As the lunch periods end, teachers pick up their classes in the lunchroom and take them out for a 10-to-20 minute recess; the children play with jump ropes, balls, and sidewalk chalk supplied by their classroom teacher.

As the afternoon arrives, the constant movement does not noticeably subside, especially in the center hallway. Students stand outside in the hallway and talk quietly as they are getting ready to move into another teacher's room to be with a multi-age group of second and third graders. Their teachers are looping their classes, which means that the students are with the same teacher for two consecutive

years. In the morning they work in same-age groups, but in the afternoon they work in multi-age groups; each of the four teachers involved takes responsibility for a specific curricular area.

At 2:45 p.m., Jackie Peck is in the teacher resource room talking with Bev Veccia when several former Cranwood students enter the room. "Hi, boys!" Mrs. Veccia cheerfully greets them and introduces them to Jackie. "This is Dr. Peck, from Cleveland State University. She's working with us on a project here at Cranwood this year. I have some errands we need you to do today. First, take these books to Ms. O'Connor's classroom, OK? Thanks." Jackie looks questioningly at Bev, who explains, "These boys, occasionally accompanied by a girl or two, come back to Cranwood regularly to run errands for me, help some of the teachers, or tutor the students. Then they remain after school is dismissed to play basketball in the gym."

Jackie asks Bev, "How did this routine start?"

"Their middle school dismisses early in the afternoon, before 2:30 p.m. I guess they miss what they had here at Cranwood last year."

The boys return in a few minutes for their next assignment, and Jackie asks, "Why do you come back to Cranwood after your school is dismissed?"

One of them, Devante, readily answers, "We like helping out the teachers; they're nice. And we want to do something to keep us off the streets."

Dismissal time approaches. The bus returns with Mrs. Carter's class, excited from their day of learning at the Rock Hall; they busily return to their classroom to store their work from the Rock Hall and pick up what they need to take home today. Other buses and vans line the street, waiting to transport children home. Some parents cluster around the doors, ready to walk their children to their cars. The hallways are alive with the sights and sounds of closing routines — students stuffing papers into book bags, teachers shutting down the computers and drawing the window shades.

The dismissal bell rings. Kindergarten classes line the steps by the main doors. Their teachers dismiss them only into the hands of someone they know and then walk the remaining students to the doors of the bus. Other classroom teachers walk their students out their designated doors. Mrs. Block stands in the hall, saying to students and parents, "Have a pleasant evening. See you for another exciting day tomorrow!" Mrs. Veccia monitors the walkers line, and Mr. Harry monitors the bus riders line.

About one-fourth of the Cranwood students do not leave with the dismissal bell, however. They are eager for the After-School program to begin! Some are ready to cook, do karate or ballet, create an art piece, or be tutored on a subject giving them difficulty. Devante and his friends call to Mr. Harry as they make their way to the gym, basketballs in hand. Cranwood staff, parents, and community partners devote their time to offering these classes. Slowly the children take their places and the hallway activity calms, until tomorrow, when another typical day begins.

Chapter Two

Cranwood Close-Ups

The Transforming Learning Communities (TLC) Framework conceptualizes a learning community in multiple dimensions. *Community* considers where, how, why, and under what conditions the school's stakeholders come together. Although the framework recognizes many contexts where these interactions may occur, three take prominence in the TLC project. *In the Classroom* focuses on student learning, *In the Corridors* focuses on adults working together, and *In the Community* focuses on the wider network of stakeholders in the Cranwood Learning Project. *Learning* attends to the actions and interactions within the three contexts. Three forms of learning of particular note in the TLC project are *collaboration, inquiry,* and *integration*. Sidebar notations accompany the following Cranwood close-ups to connect these dimensions of community and learning with this case study.

Close-up on Tara Carter: Preparing for Difference Instead of Expecting a Grade of Sameness

Tara Carter is one of the strongest teachers at Cranwood, and she has taken the implementation of multi-age classrooms quite seriously. Four years ago, Tara embarked on the daunting task of changing the way she taught. She offered these reflections on those early days:

In the Corridors
Key School visit

The first year we went to the Indianapolis Key School. That was the year we decided to do the multi-age [classrooms]. There were a lot of people here who thought we did it too quickly. That was also the summer we went to the workshop on multiple intelligences. A lot of people felt overwhelmed. They couldn't see how it was working to benefit their class. But I didn't feel that way. I felt, "I know it's hard work, but I feel it's worthwhile." I felt change was needed in Cleveland schools. Students were not learning. We needed

to do something. Studies that I read about multiple-intelligence theory and multi-age classrooms were all very positive. Maybe the test scores weren't that much higher, but attendance and attitude toward school changed. Multi-age classes push you a little more to teach students on an individualized basis and to gather materials on more than one level. You prepare for difference instead of expecting a "grade" of sameness. That's why I like it. – Tara Carter, teacher

In the Classroom
preparing for difference

Tara had the desire to change, and she read studies that indicated how positive change could occur. She made strides toward change with an open mind. Tara described the changes that are visible in her classroom:

Inquiry
Tara studies how to make curricular changes

All books we keep on the shelf; they are resources that we pull out when we need them. Students have bins for pencils on their tables. They have subject area folders with vocabulary lists, fact lists, their work that's been graded, and other resources to help them. The writing folders have story maps, story retellings, writing prompts, and paper for writing. I use chart paper. I don't use the board much; it's usually loaded with posters. I always have reading centers. I work in small groups. We do more group work than whole-class work. – Tara Carter

Tara's work with Tim Harry, the school's community broker, in the Apprentice Program at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum is another change that is particularly noteworthy. Tim described the collaborative process and also the student outcomes as he observed them.

In the Community: *Collaboration*
Tim and Rock Hall personnel construct a test

Educators from the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum worked with me to construct a geography test for Tara Carter's students. They wanted to ask the students to find cities, states, and other particular information presented in the exhibits. They planned for students to work in small groups to gather this information from the exhibits. This was a concern for me; I was a bit leery of this, because I felt it might be sheer identification of facts — lower-level learning. I felt the students would not understand that there were connections to where blues started, where jazz began, how rock fused with country and why. It took a long time to make my

case to the good people at the Rock Hall, but we finally compromised. We got together with the students and gave them maps after they found the answers to the factual questions. Then we asked questions such as, "Look at where the fathers and mothers of blues got started. Where was it? Why do you think blues started there?" The children began to relate personal information, like their family was from Georgia, Mississippi, the Delta. They began to tell us what the climate was like. They began to tell us their histories — how their great-grandfathers were in bands and still played the guitar on the rocker. They began to relate and construct meaning that connected climate and the start of the blues; they mentioned the types of plants that grew there, what the area looked like, how it contrasted with Cleveland. They mentioned slavery. I found this to be remarkable. This was truly higher-level learning. Keep in mind these were fourth and fifth graders. – Tim Harry, Community Broker

In the Classroom:
Inquiry and Integration
students work in the Rock Hall to gather information and connect to their lives

As their work in the Apprentice Program continued, Tara's students wrote biographies that they presented at the Rock Hall to an audience of their mentors, peers, and parents. Tara uses this community connection to expand her classroom. She plans weeks in advance for the lessons that take place in the exhibit halls of the museum, and she sees many positive outcomes for her students.

This opportunity to go to the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame gives the students a chance to see why they need to learn what they need to learn. They write more in their journals and spend more time on details. They are learning from what they do. The presentations they give will be a big part of their grade. It is exciting to see children learn from what they are doing. – Tara Carter

In the Classroom:
Integration
the Rock Hall extends the classroom

Close-up on Tim Harry, Community Broker: Architect of Programming, Mediator of Change

We arrive in Mr. Harry's room, which is being transformed into a parent center. Three mothers and three healthy seventh-grade boys are cleaning and painting the walls. One of the mothers, Mrs. Smith, even has her youngest child painting a small corner. We hear Mr. Harry comment, "There's no greater gift than to serve another person." This is the basis for all his service learning programs, or so it seems.

> *What we are doing here is revolutionary. We are changing the face of education without looking back. These boys went to Cranwood and are back to serve us. What is their reward? Why are they here? Because they are loved. Their reward is something that cannot be purchased. Sure, I'll buy them a pizza now and then, or let them stay after school to shoot baskets; but by far what they get from this is the pure rush of helping others and feeling good about themselves.* – Tim Harry, Community Broker

Tim Harry made these comments in response to a question posed by a Cleveland State professor who is doing a separate research project on service learning related to race relations. She and Tim are sitting at a table away from the fray of paint, plaster, and a little girl's dripping paintbrush. He continues to relate:

> *Everything we receive in transforming my office into a parent center is through the gifts or assets of this community. The carpet was donated by a parent who builds Hollywood Video stores in Ohio and Michigan, the brushes and drop cloths were brought in by these mothers, the help is free, the paint was partially donated by a local store owner. We received a $1,000 grant to get things for the room. We may have to send the money back!*

In the Community: *Collaboration*
adults in the school and community agree that parental involvement is important

Tim Harry's position is unusual. He is called the *"community broker"* and serves the school in varied roles, almost solely determined by the needs of the students.

On Sunday nights, I make my "to do" list just like everyone. When Monday comes, I walk in the school, and there are five or six kids who are running toward me telling me of their troubles, giving me hugs, or needing some sort of help. Usually these concerns need to be taken care of right away. The "to do" list goes in a hopper; I'm lucky to get to it by Wednesday. This is no different than what classroom teachers experience. The only difference is that I am not with the students daily in the classroom. What I am attempting to do is buffer that classroom teacher from problems their students may have, whether it be a disagreement with another person or a lost coat. I feel that if I can help solve their problems, the teacher will have more time to concentrate on teaching rather than on parenting the children of Cranwood.
– Tim Harry, Community Broker

In the Classroom
Inquiry
students solve problems using community resources

The "to do" list Tim refers to are the community opportunities that will enable students to serve their community in connection to their classroom studies. In the Apprentice Program, students in grades four/five observe how a museum works from behind the scenes. Spending one full day per week for six to eight weeks, students help their museum staff mentors with daily routines, and mentors discuss how their departments work and the real issues they face. The museum becomes a classroom as students use the exhibits to solve problems or make inferences, such as in the geography lesson previously described in the close-up on Tara Carter. Grades three/four students in the Mentor Program travel to a local business and work with a mentor for two hours per day for six to eight weeks. The students help their mentor with daily job duties and record each day's events in a journal; their teachers instruct them in the writing process to help them construct effective speeches they present to their mentors, peers, and parents at the program's conclusion. Students in grades two/three participating in an intergenerational program — Magic Friends — learn science and visual arts while assisting a senior citizen (a vignette of this program appears in the following close-up on Laura Maruniak). Cranwood students meet with their Magic Friends twice a month for five months during the school year. Special education students are included in each of these programs.

When asked how other schools might begin programs like those at Cranwood, Tim responded:

> *Look at this room. A year ago it was a reading room for students not performing at grade level. Now it will become a parent center with the help of others. Change happens every day here. You have to keep moving; you can't get stuck. To get programs started, you have to reach out to others and keep the excitement of your project in full view of others. You have to start fires under people. That's the only way to explain how to initiate programming that works.*
> – Tim Harry

Close-up on Laura Maruniak: "Magic Friends" in the Classroom

Students in Laura Maruniak's second grade developed friendships with local residents through the Magic Friends program. The following vignette portrays the nature of their interaction.

In the Classroom/ In the Community
intergenerational learning with Magic Friends from the Maple Heights Senior Center

> It is a brisk, sunny Wednesday morning in December, and Laura Maruniak's class of 22 second graders are sitting clustered around their tables with their Magic Friends from the nearby senior center. The seniors come to Mrs. Maruniak's classroom twice each month to work together with the children on a craft. Today, as they are waiting for Carolina Martin, the consultant who offers Art on Wheels, one of the male seniors is helping a boy with his math homework; others are fondly hugging the children and giving gentle back rubs. Some of the girls notice the jewelry the senior women are wearing and carefully reach to touch it. Mrs. Maruniak asks the children to lead the seniors in the reading of one of their classroom poems and the singing of one their songs.
>
> Carolina arrives about 10 minutes later with her wagon full of supplies for today's craft — a holiday bell to hang on the tree. Ellie, a Cranwood fifth-grade helper, accompanies Carolina. As Carolina explains how they will make bells for each other, she tells the class, "you will

be sharing them, like you share your friendship in Magic Friends."

As they work together, the seniors assist the children with tasks like tying ribbon bows. Sometimes the seniors correct the children when they appear to not be following directions. Other times the seniors act on the children's behalf. For example, two boys did silver bells instead of gold as Carolina had planned, and the senior working with them said, "He wanted it to be silver," affirming his choice. Mrs. Maruniak smiles at this expression of individuality.

Carolina notices that the students and seniors have just about all completed their bells and some children are beginning to move about the classroom, so she reminds them, *"Stay in your seats, please, until everyone is finished."* Mrs. Maruniak moves through the room, admiring the bells; she also reminds the students to return unused supplies to Carolina's wagon. Before the seniors leave to board their bus, which will take them back to the center, Carolina draws everyone's attention to the bells she is holding up to catch the light streaming in the window. "See how beautiful they look when the sun shines on them! See how they sparkle!"

Just then Mrs. Dorana Block (the principal) steps into the classroom. "Oh, look at those bells you have made! They are just beautiful! We are so happy to have you residents here with us, and all of us at Cranwood wish you all very happy holidays!"

"Boys and girls, what can we think about when we put these on the tree this holiday?" Carolina asks.

The children enthusiastically answer, "Magic Friends! Friends we made here. Christ's birthday."

"Remember, when I began I said you would be sharing your bells today, just like you share yourself with your Magic Friend? Now I want you to exchange the bell you

made for the one your Magic Friend made." Smiles appear, accompanying the spoken "thank you" echoing through the room, and hugs are shared along with the bells.

Laura Maruniak does more than accept this intergenerational experience as part of Cranwood's community programming. She integrates it into her curriculum by planning for her students to write reflectively about their experiences with their Magic Friends.

Integration
curriculum connected to community-based interaction

Close-up on Kelly Malone: Working Together on Behalf of Students

Kelly Malone is one of two school psychologists who were assigned to Cranwood to initiate a pilot program called Intervention Based Assessment (IBA) during the 1993-94 school year. Three other pilot project sites withdrew their participation after only one year, but Cranwood has sustained its involvement in the project. When the other three opted out, Kelly asked Judy Wright, then lead teacher, if Cranwood intended to continue. Judy responded, "Why would we drop out?"

What takes place in a typical IBA team meeting? Who attends? Jackie Peck attended several IBA team meetings and constructed the following vignette from notes on one of the meetings.

In the Corridors
Intervention Based Assessment team meeting

Kelly: *On the agenda for today's IBA meeting is fluency screening of all second and third graders. We welcome the City Year volunteers, PTA president Mrs. Smith, parent volunteers, and Jackie Peck to our meeting today. Packets of leveled text samples and scoring procedures have been prepared. The text samples come from basal readers and are leveled by beginning, middle, and end of each grade. Classroom teachers will suggest a starting level for each student. Take a running record of the student's oral reading in three one-minute intervals. Score the number of words correctly read at each interval. Then find the median score for that level. Have the student read until she/he reaches the frustration level as indicated on the scoring sheet. Do any of you have any questions?*

Inquiry
fluency screening of all second and third graders

Collaboration
City Year and parent volunteers

Stephen: *Should there be a certain amount of time between intervals?*

Kelly: *As you do more of these, you may be able do consecutive one-minute intervals without really stopping.*

Sally: *Are we only scoring correct reading of words? What about proper nouns?*

Kelly: *Basically, yes. Proper nouns can be pronounced for the student if needed.*

Jackie: *I would suggest starting one or two levels lower if in doubt, to boost the student's confidence and motivation. Also, some pronunciation miscues are considered insignificant, dialect differences, for example. Those words would be scored as correct.*

Kelly: *Thank you, Jackie. We're happy to have your expertise and your input.*

Another typical IBA meeting concerned a student whose needs had been previously addressed by the team but who now need to be reevaluated. The parent of the student, the student's teacher, the psychologists, and the lead teacher were present and participated in this meeting. The student is on medication, but it doesn't seem to be helping him manage his behavior in the classroom. Kelly talked with the mother about when the boy took his medication and what kind it was; then she and the teacher suggested the boy take the medication closer to school starting time each morning so it would take effect during classroom hours. The parent, teachers, and Kelly agreed on this intervention and that they would continue to observe to evaluate its success.

In the Corridors:
Collaboration
intervention decisions about students

Close-up on Bev Veccia, Lead Teacher: Supporting Collaboration in the Classroom, in the Corridor, and in the Boardroom

In the Classroom
small-group proficiency-skill lessons

In her role as lead teacher at Cranwood, Bev Veccia fulfills multiple responsibilities, such as providing small-group instruction on proficiency skills, gathering resources to help teachers work effectively in multi-age classrooms, and organizing parent participation events as mentioned in the preceding vignettes. Some of Bev's responsibilities can best be understood through her own voice in the context of case study team meetings, as the following vignette demonstrates.

Collaboration
lead teacher works with a third grade class

In mid-October, the case team meeting was beset with the usual last-minute schedule changes that occur at Cranwood. At 2:40 p.m., the agreed-upon meeting time, Cheryl Trebec was walking her class down to the art room, Tim Harry was in the office helping three boys settle a playground dispute, and Bev Veccia was running late for scheduled work in Ms. Newton's third-grade classroom. Cheryl and Jackie decided to meet in the teacher resource room and begin to discuss case-study progress until Tim and Bev could join them. After a few minutes, Tim led a graduate assistant from Cleveland State University, who had just arrived, down to the resource room; then he returned to the office. At 3:10 p.m., Cheryl left to meet her class in the art room just as Bev arrived from her work in the third grade. Let's join the meeting in progress.

Integration
multiple intelligence theory in a schoolwide presentation

Jackie: *I was talking about some observations I had made during the portfolio sharing event. Maybe I commented to you about the different responses I saw students give to each other, particularly when the girl in Ms. Newton's class was singing. Wasn't it the boys in her class who did poetry?*

Bev: *They did, yes. They did the ending, yes.*

Jackie: *Hmm. Let's see. [Distributes case-study information.] I'm losing track here with the tag team meetings that we have. There are two file folders on our shelf in the cabinet in Tim's room with copies of consent forms, one for adults and one for students. They need to be completed by anyone we interview. OK. Now, what else have we been talking about? Oh, yes. Cheryl explained some of the mentoring program Magic Friends, and I will visit one of those events.*

Bev: *Did you talk about the IBA team? The intervention?*

Jackie: *We talked about it. When are those meetings?*

Bev: *There's one every Tuesday. They're from 8:30 to 9:30 a.m. They are really intriguing. I'm what they call the coordinator, but for this next one coming up, Mrs. Block is sending me to a meeting in her place, so I'm going to come just to drop off the agendas, and then I'm going to leave. I won't be back in the building until close to 11 o'clock. But the team itself is 12 to 13 other people, and our psychologists actually are the facilitators for the meeting. It's really something to see.*

Jackie: *Are they every Tuesday?*

Bev: *Every Tuesday. This coming Tuesday we have two updates, which means we're going to be talking about two students whom we already brought to the team and whose teachers already have interventions in place in their classrooms so we're going to be helping. Actually, one little girl is in Mrs. Bennett's room. Last year she was a second-grade student, and because Mrs. Bennett is looping this year she is now a third-grade teacher. So now her student is a third grader; she has her same entire class. After a couple of weeks into the school year, the mom contacted Mrs. Bennett*

In the Corridors
Collaboration
IBA team joint decision making

and said, "We tried intervention all last year." [Pause when a student comes into the resource room to ask Mrs. Veccia a question.] This was one of our first students we saw last year, and we updated her all through the year. At that time, we felt she didn't need testing for a special placement; that intervention was Before we do that, we'll bring her back to the team [to] decide as a group rather than just the psychologist saying, "Do this," and the mom saying, "Do this."

Jackie: *OK. Anything else coming up that you think we should see?*

Bev: *Hopefully by Tuesday we'll have a new report card.* *(See pp. 30-31.)* *Have you seen it yet?*

Jackie: *No. You were talking about it though. Is this the culmination, the product of two years' work?*

Bev: *Yes. And it's set up based on the multiple intelligences. We adapted it from the one used by the Key School in Indianapolis. I'm just so excited. I just can't wait. It's not your regular "A, B, C, D" act. The grading scale is unique. We have R, which is rapid progress; we have C, which is continual progress; S is slow progress; N is no progress; and then because it's got so many categories, certain teachers won't be doing certain skills, so we put a slash meaning "not applicable." And we also have a participation key, using the words "extrinsically motivated," "intrinsically motivated," "disruptive," "passive." Under each of the intelligences, the teacher has to give a participation grade first.*

Integration
report card based on multiple-intelligences theory

Jackie: *Who participated in designing this report card?*

Bev: *What happened was we had a curriculum committee, and we opened it up to the whole staff, to any who wanted to be on this committee. Then*

we divided the committee into two parts; one worked on a primary form and the other worked on an intermediate report card [the district had been using two different report cards for these levels]. What we have is actually the product of the intermediate committee. This happened at the end of the 1995-96 school year. Then I became lead teacher, and when we came back two weeks before school started in the fall of 1996, we showed both the primary and the intermediate report cards to the entire staff, and then they decided, "Well, this is our program. Why should we have two separate report cards? Everybody needs to have a report card based on the intelligences." So then the whole staff revised the intermediate report card to fit what they felt should be on it.

Jackie: *Would you say that there was 90 percent participation? One hundred percent?*

Bev: *I would say, at the revision, 90 percent. Actually, no, let me take that back. Of the classroom teachers, I would say 100 percent because we showed it to the teachers who didn't come to that meeting at a later grade-level meeting, and again, they added their changes. So everybody participated.*

Graduate Assistant: *What was the mechanism for decision making? Was it "majority rule"? Did everybody have the power of veto until consensus was reached?*

Bev: *We actually divided into little subgroups according to grade level. Yes, that's what we did. And each little subgroup had a copy of the report card, and they added their little changes. After our subgroups, we came back together, we reported out, and everybody just kind of came to a general consensus. Another thing that every*

In the Corridors
reaching consensus on report card

body is excited about is that the old report cards didn't really have any room for teachers to put comments or for parents to comment back. So we got big boxes for each quarter for teachers to make comments and for parents to write back.

In the Corridors
communications between parents and teachers

Jackie: *I was wondering if you, at any point in that process, had parent input, or have you gathered it informally over the years?*

In the Corridors: *Collaboration*
parent input on Academic Achievement Plan

Bev: *Even when we were writing our Academic Achievement Plan, we had parents getting in on it. It's usually our PTA moms who are most active. They're always in the building.*

Jackie: *When will this new report card be used for the first time?*

Bev: *They're going to go home the second week in November. Our open house is October 22. I'm going to explain the new report card to the parents then. I plan to show the teachers the finished product during the lunch periods next Tuesday. You guys can be my protector when I hand out these boxes!*

In the Corridors
communicating the end product (report card) to teachers and parents

Jackie: *How many people are new to this faculty, who haven't had any input on this report card?*

Bev: *Seven, including the new SBH (Severe Behavior Handicap) teacher, but the report card does not encompass SBH or kindergarten; it's just grades one to five.*

Jackie: *Of course, some of the new faculty are first-year teachers who haven't used another report card other than in their university course field placements. Let me know when you have this scheduled for sure, and I'll try to be here to observe reactions and responses to this finished product!*

Close-up on Megan O'Connor: Teaching Kids How to Give Back

Although Megan O'Connor is a first-year teacher, she fully engages her students in the community-service learning programs at Cranwood. She conveys commitment and excitement about her work with her students, even though she notices some teachers seem to lack motivation; she commented during an interview with Jackie, they "just roll their eyes and say, 'Oh, after your first year you're not going to be so happy anymore.'" The following vignette shows Ms. O'Connor's enthusiasm and how it spills over to her students and the neighborhood.

The school year is coming to a close. Ms. O'Connor's students are working on the final issue of their class newspaper, 118 News Flash (see excerpt). Some students are editing their work, and some are revising their copy at the computers.

118 News Flash

by Antonese Rice

This year we did a newspaper. We thought of the name ourselves. Then we got people who wanted subscriptions. We had to write and edit, and type our articles ourselves. It was a long process. Every month we had a deadline and sometimes at the last minute we had to rush and it was stressful because we only had one computer to work with. We learned to be better writers and type faster. Sometimes it took us awhile to think about what we wanted to write. One time someone shut off the computer and we had to start over because it wasn't saved. We learned about the newspaper by getting *The Plain Dealer* delivered to our classroom. We learned about all the sections, and how to find things and use it everyday to help us. We had special distribution teams, and writing teams, and preparing teams. I liked our newspaper.

"OK, class. Is your writing for the newspaper this month about finished? I've seen some very good reflections on your community service this year. Tamika, I know you were writing about your experience in the Mentor Program. Would you like to share what you wrote with the class?"

In the Classroom
student voice in classroom newspaper

Tamika reads confidently from her computer-printed copy. *"I like going to Progressive because it was fun. My mentor was nice and all the people that worked by her. My mentor taught me things like how to spend my money wisely and how to set priorities. I also learned what it is like to have a real job. It is hard work. I answered phones, copied papers, and did a big project for her. My mentor also spent time with me on the weekends. I will never forget my mentor because she was like a second mother to me."*

In the Classroom/ In the Community
students work with mentors at Progressive Insurance

"That's really well written, Tamika. Tyrell, are you ready to read your piece about Brian McIntyre?"

There's a knock at the door. One of the students answers it. A younger student enters and tells Ms. O'Connor that Mr. Harry needs a conflict mediator to come to his room to help settle an argument between two kindergartners. Ms. O'Connor turns to Tanya and says, *"Tanya, you've been really effective working with the younger children. Do you want to go this time?"* Tanya agrees and leaves the room in a businesslike manner. Then Ms. O'Connor continues, *"OK, Tyrell. Go ahead with your reading."*

In the Classroom: *Collaboration*
student-conflict mediators help other students make decisions about behavior

Tyrell smiles at the class and begins reading. *"One of the things I can reflect on is when Brian McIntyre came to visit us all the way from Newschannel 5. Brian came and told us about his job and his responsibilities as an adult. He explained to us that he does consumer reports. That means he helps us find the best deal for our money. Sometimes he busts people that are scamming on us. He said that you must always be alert as a consumer. The most important thing he could tell us was to stay in school and not talk slang. Talking slang will get us nowhere in life because people do not want to hire sloppy talkers. He also said to stay away from drugs. After he talked to us he signed autographs and gave us '5 on your side' stickers. He is a very smart guy."*

In the Classroom/ In the Community
guest speaker from local television newsroom — Brian McIntyre

In the Classroom/ In the Community
neighborhood flower planting

"I am so proud of all of you, class. You have done much fine work this year, especially with your writing! Before we get ready to go to lunch, let's hear Leeta read her article about the flowers we planted in the neighborhood."

Leeta takes a reporter-like stance and begins to read in a clear voice. *"The thing I liked about this year was planting flowers for our community. It was nice to help others so they do not have to work hard in their gardens. We got six hundred flowers donated by Heinens. We started at 10:30 a.m. and worked until 3:30 p.m. We had to go door to door a month in advance to sign people up. We asked them where they wanted the flowers planted and made a chart. The first day we were supposed to plant it rained, so we had to wait. We had to carry our own flat of flowers around the neighborhood, and when we got to a house we planted them. Some of the neighbors were at work, but some came out and helped us. It was nice to talk to them and learn about them. Mrs. Davis sent us candy to thank us and took our picture for the Cranwood newsletter. Another lady gave us ice tea and pop. Brian McIntyre came back to plant with us. Channel 5, Channel 43, and Channel 19 came and filmed us, and we were on the six o'clock news. It was hard work, harder than I thought it would be, and we were hot. I feel good that I did this, and so does the class."*

Megan enthusiastically responds to the class: *"I'm glad you have all learned how doing service for others can make you feel good. Now you can teach others. I am proud of you!"*

Megan feels these service learning programs are particularly meaningful for her students.

I see some of my students looking up to an adult that takes the place of a missing parent. I see them communicate properly, not as defensively. I see a lot of the kids work in teams with their mentors, and this reinforces what I teach in the classroom. Many of these kids have responsibilities we never had at that age. Therefore, in a way they lose out on certain childhood experiences — simple developmental

things like sharing and teamwork. They dedicate their newspaper to Brian McIntyre because he is such an excellent role model for them! He grew up in Cleveland and became successful. He was one of them. – Megan O'Connor, teacher

These close-ups provide one way to think about what it is like to be a learner and teacher at Cranwood Learning Academy. They also demonstrate Cranwood's strong connections to the community. This is evident through the steady presence of volunteers — City Year or parent — and the donation of tangibles from businesses and families. Through the service learning programs — Apprentice, Mentor, Magic Friends — classrooms are extended into community settings and businesses. These settings are not just being used as classroom extensions, however. The people who work and live in them collaborate with Cranwood staff and students to both serve and learn in reciprocal ways. Further, these experiences do not stand apart from the classroom goals; they are carefully woven into the curriculum in ways that support the students' self-esteem and academic achievement. These close-ups demonstrate how the community context of Cranwood Learning Academy supports the TLC learning dimensions of collaboration and integration.

As the case team sought to understand the driving forces of this strong community context, the work of Tim Harry as community broker and Bev Veccia as lead teacher figured prominently in the picture. Tim said the commitment was strong because he asked parents and community partners, "What can you contribute to The Learning Project?" He cited the After School program, in which parents, grandparents, teachers, and community members volunteer their time and expertise as they work with students remaining after the school day, as evidence of the response. Bev observed that Cranwood parents want to be involved in their children's schooling, and they request evening meetings to facilitate their participation. In the context of intervention meetings and academic achievement planning, Bev intentionally invites parents into the decision-making process. Both Tim and Bev also commented that "Mrs. Block makes parents feel welcome."

In the midst of this strong community context, moreover, individual autonomy is also strong. For within the programming Tim arranges, it is individual teachers who commit to their students' successful participation; and when Bev seeks faculty participation in events such as the Family Proficiency Night, she intentionally uses a face-to-face approach to garner commitment from individual teachers. Many decisions of how and when to participate appear to be individually determined. This dimension of autonomy within community underlies the twists and turns portrayed in the next chapter.

PUPIL PROGRESS REPORT — page 1 of 2
CRANWOOD LEARNING ACADEMY
"THE LEARNING PROJECT"
587-2264

Student's Name _____

School Year _____ Level _____

Birthdate _____

Teacher(s) _____

Principal _____

To Parents or Guardians:

This Progress Report, along with our Portfolio Assessment and Parent/Student/Teacher Conference System, is intended to give you an accurate account of your child's individual growth. The purpose of our Multiple Intelligence/Multi-Age School is to ensure success in every child, both intellectually and socially. We encourage you to visit our school.

EVALUATION KEY
R = Rapid Progress
C = Continual Progress
S = Slow Progress
N = No Progress
/ = Does Not Apply

REPORTING PERIOD	1	2	3	4
Days Present				
Days Absent				
Times Tardy				

Participation Key

Δ INTRINSICALLY MOTIVATED:
Student shows enjoyment and involvement in activity regardless of external support.

☐ EXTRINSICALLY MOTIVATED:
Student responds only to teacher-initiated activities or rewards.

○ PASSIVE:
Little or no effort to participate.

X DISRUPTIVE:
Interferes with others being able to participate.

Qtr. 1 Teacher Comments	Parent Comments	Qtr. 2 Teacher Comments	Parent Comments
Qtr. 3 Teacher Comments	Parent Comments	Qtr. 4 Teacher Comments	Name _____ Student Placement for School Year _____ will be level _____

THE MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES
PUPIL PROGRESS REPORT — page 2 of 2

LINGUISTIC	1	2	3	4
PARTICIPATION				
Listening				
Speaking				
Writing				
• Capitalization				
• Punctuation				
• Complete sentences				
• Proper Tense/Grammar				
• Legible Manuscript				
• Legible Cursive				
• Writes a topic sentence				
• Writes a beginning, middle, end				
• Edits own work				
• Completes journals/reports				
• Spelling				
Reading				
• Sequencing of events				
• Retelling				
• Predicting an outcome				
• Picks out main idea				
• Reads with comprehension				
• Setting, characters, problem, solution				
• Uses vocabulary correctly				
Library				
• Enjoys reading				
• Reads different genres				
• Knowledge of library skills				
INTERPERSONAL				
PARTICIPATION				
Cooperation/Teamwork				
Leadership				
Sharing resources				

LOGICAL-MATHEMATICAL	1	2	3	4
PARTICIPATION				
• Number Sense				
• Computation				
• Problem-Solving				
• Measurement				
• Geometry				
• Patterns/Relations				
• Data Analysis				
SPATIAL				
PARTICIPATION				
Science				
Social Studies				
Art				
MUSICAL				
PARTICIPATION				
• Vocal				
• Instrumental				
BODILY-KINESTHETIC				
PARTICIPATION				
Physical Education				
Health				
INTRAPERSONAL				
PARTICIPATION				
• Completes classwork				
• Completes homework				
• Makes appropriate choices				
• Follows directions				
• Has materials and supplies				
• Dress code				

Chapter Three

The Twists and Turns in the Change Process

Gloria Houston (1996), distinguished educator and author of renowned children's books, told how she used a storytelling technique to diffuse social disputes between early adolescents. She asked the involved parties to write what happened first and then to use the connecting phrase "and then" to move to each next event in the story. In this chapter, we use a similar strategy to present Cranwood's chronology and map the twists and turns of its change process. We have constructed Tables 1 to 3 to organize these twists and turns for you. They map over time the key changes in classroom, corridor, and community contexts that were described through the close-ups of Chapter Two. Documents lend historic perspective and bolster the credence of personal experience accounts. We address each context separately and then consider the twists and turns across contexts.

In the Classroom: The Context of Student Learning

Key changes in student learning involve conceptual frameworks such as The Theory of Multiple Intelligences (Gardner, 1983), structures such as multi-age classrooms (Greene, 1998) and looping, and extended classroom spaces provided through community-service learning programming. Each of these is mapped in Table 1 and discussed in the following sections.

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Table 1

Timeline of Changes in the Classroom: The Context of Student Learning

	1993-1994	1994-1996	1996-1998
Multiple Intelligences (MI) Theory	• observations of MI theory at Key School	• professional development through lead teacher • infused into community-service learning programs	• absence of talk about MI theory • included in Academic Achievement Plan • basis for new report card
Multi-age (MA) Classrooms	• observations of MA classrooms at Key • those who made the observations enthusiastically pushed to include MA classrooms in The Learning Project; others felt confused	• multi-age classrooms • some were committed to MA classrooms • some felt overwhelmed	• several teachers remain committed to MA classrooms but say it is difficult during testing time • A.M. looping in 2nd and 3rd grades; P.M. multi-age
Community-Service Learning		• Mentor Program • Magic Friends • Apprentice Program • After-School Extended-Day Program	• increasingly embedded in the curriculum

Multiple Intelligences (MI) Theory

1993-94: Planning for MI Theory

Recognition that children learn in different ways figured prominently in Cranwood's original Learning Project plans. Following a visit to the Gardner's Key School in Indianapolis, the Cranwood faculty engaged in staff development on MI theory.

And Then . . . MI Theory Becomes Integrated into the Curriculum
1994-95 School Year

Judy Wright, the lead teacher at this time, directed and supported the infusion of MI theory into the curriculum. Tim Harry also integrated MI theory into community and service learning programming such as the Mentor Program and Magic Friends. At the close of this school year, the faculty began to revise the report card to reflect MI theory.

And Then . . . MI Theory is Included in the Academic Achievement Plan and New Report Card
1996-97 School Year

In 1996, Cranwood assumed responsibility for annually planning and evaluating student academic progress. The Cranwood faculty included MI in the goals and strategies of the Academic Achievement Plan. The close-up on Bev Veccia describes how the faculty also worked to develop a report card based on this theory.

And Then . . . MI Theory Becomes More Explicit through the Report Card but More Implicit in Classrooms.
1997-98 School Year

MI theory appeared to become more implicitly than explicitly addressed in classrooms. Although posters of MI theory were displayed in offices and classrooms, teacher-talk, both informally and in more structured committee meetings, did not often focus on MI theory. This lack of comment was observed even with the introduction and inaugural use of the report card based on MI theory. But Kelly Malone, one of the school psychologists, did provide these snapshots of MI theory in Cranwood teaching and learning. "I see a lot of gross motor [learning] integrated into the course of the day and the academic lessons. There's evidence of visuals and increased use of music." Another snapshot captured MI theory at work in the portfolio sharing event discussed in the close-up on Bev Veccia.

Multi-age Classroom Structures

Summer 1994: First Visit to the Key School Prompts Multi-age (MA) Classroom Structures

Seven teachers and Dorann Block, the principal, visited the Key School in Indianapolis and became excited when they saw MI theory practiced in multi-age classrooms. Before the beginning of school in the fall of 1994, they shared their excitement with the rest of the Cranwood faculty. They had jointly made a commitment to staff development on MI theory, but those who had visited the Key School suggested making an even more significant change, namely working in multi-age (MA) classroom structures.

And Then . . . Faculty Develop Various Perspectives on Multi-age Classrooms 1994-95 School Year

Perspectives varied on the purposes and benefits of MA classrooms, with some being more excited and committed to multi-age structures than others. Laura Maruniak was not able to visit the Key School and observe multi-age classrooms at work. This was the beginning of her second year of teaching at Cranwood, and her reflections on this event provide a different perspective from that of those who had visited the Key School and made the original commitment to employ MA classrooms.

> *We had some speakers in for those of us who didn't visit the Key School. We were kind of overwhelmed, because [our plan included] multiple intelligence and then the multi-age kind of just got thrown in. When we had our two-day inservice, we had a speaker talk about multi-age. It was a little bit confusing.* – Laura Maruniak, teacher

Others echo Laura's perspective. Tara Carter commented, "A lot of people felt overwhelmed. They couldn't see how it was working to benefit their class. They felt it was very hard and we were moving too fast." Yet Tara said, "I myself didn't feel that way."

> *The first year was the biggest test. I really feel we took a little more on than we should have. But then as we went on from year to year, I think that our strategy was a good one — to pick and choose areas that we perceived as weak, say, portfolio assessment, and concentrate a whole year on portfolio assessment.* – Dorann Block, school principal

And Then . . . Varied Perspectives Result in More Diverse Multi-age Classrooms 1995-97 School Years

The close-up on Tara Carter portrays one teacher's understanding of multi-age classrooms. Although Tara speaks of "preparing for difference instead of expecting a 'grade' of sameness," another description of implementation provided by Cheryl Trebec indicates [that] she still thought in terms of grades. Cheryl worked with six-, seven-, and eight-year-olds in a multi-age classroom structure during these years. She gave the following reflections on how she perceived the MA structure prompted changes in her teaching and the student learning in her classroom:

> *When teaching a math concept, I teach to all grade levels and just extend it for the second grade. For example, when we were making graphs with link blocks, I expected the first graders to trace their blocks onto a piece of paper, but I expected the second graders to be able to draw it on graph paper. When I taught two-digit addition, the first graders had just simple two-digit problems, but the second graders had problems involving regrouping.* – Cheryl Trebec, teacher

Cheryl also described ways the second graders take a more active role in the classroom routines, such as taking attendance and passing out materials; she finds this leaves more time for her to attend to her students' special needs. In addition, Cheryl observed, "Students seem to take charge of their learning and use me as a resource person. I see positive results."

During this school year — Bev Veccia's first year as lead teacher — several teachers began to redefine multi-age to include looping structures (Grant, Johnson & Richardson, 1996) and departmentalization; several teams of teachers wrote looping proposals for implementation the following year (see box). Looping is similar to MA in that it provides students and parents more than one year with a particular teacher, but it differs in that teachers can focus on preparation for only one proficiency test grade level.

Multi-age Looping Proposal

1. Teachers keep their same students for a two-year period. One teacher teaches a first-grade classroom and the other a second grade (keeping as many second graders as she has now and just adding from the other teacher's classroom to get to 25 students.) The next year, the teacher who had first grade will move with her students up to second grade, and the second-grade teacher will get the new first-grade students.
2. Every afternoon between 2:30 p.m. and 3:45 p.m., the teachers will combine their classes for either a team teaching lesson or a multi-age configuration, where each teacher will teach either science and health or social studies. If there is a special class during this time, the multi-age class will go to that special class.
3. During the morning, the teachers will keep their grade-specific class for math, reading, and language art lessons. The afternoon will be reserved for multi-age teaching, where the classes will be completely blended as regards to grade, race, gender, academic ability, and behavior.
4. The two teachers to do this multi-age looping will be Mrs. Trebec, who will take first grade, and Mrs. Washko, who will take the second grade. In the afternoons, Mrs. Washko will be teaching social studies and Mrs. Trebec will teach science. There will also be team teaching at least once a week, where we will utilize the literacy area for group lessons or learning centers about a specific subject.
5. To make this plan work, we will need to have the same special subject times in the afternoon so we can use it for planning and so the students can take advantage of multi-age special subjects.
6. We also will be open to inclusion. A child may fit into three different classes, the first or second grade or the multi-age class.

This plan complements the theories proposed by Cranwood Leaning Academy. Multi-age teaching will be in evidence, the multiple intelligences will be emphasized in the classrooms, and children will be better prepared to be successful on their grade proficiency tests.

Cheryl Trebec
Marty Washko

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And Then . . . Multi-age Implementation Becomes More Widely Varied, Including Looping Structures

1997-98 School Year

Bernadette Gliha, a first-year teacher and recent graduate of Cleveland State University, joined the Cranwood staff in the fall of 1997. She expressed comfort with the MA classroom structure. She defined MA in terms of student interaction and felt she had been prepared to teach in ways consistent with MA concepts. "I was taught in college to do cooperative learning, peer tutoring, hands-on learning. I already knew how to do it; it was just getting the class to do it." Typical of many first-year teachers, Bernadette talks a lot about classroom behavior and the progress her fourth and fifth graders were making toward becoming independent learners. She also described a lesson in measurement to illustrate their growth in working together.

> *We measured the floor of our classroom in lengths. At first we were doing it in pencil lengths. Everyone had different measurements, because we all had different kinds of pencils. They realized this wasn't a standard unit of measurement, so we used rulers to make our measurements. At first they worked by themselves, and then I asked them to work with a partner to find things that are more than 12 inches long. One person recorded findings in a journal, and the other person measured with the ruler.* – Bernadette Gliha, teacher

Bernadette commented that "the younger kids learn so much more from the older kids." She is careful to not treat the younger students as less able; she reminds them, "you'll be able to help the [younger] kids next year."

New definitions of MA concepts were put into practice; looping was implemented in second and third grades. Laura offered some reflections on her multi-age experience and her first-year experience with looping.

> *Four years ago, when I had a multi-age classroom, I did see a lot of children helping each other after they were taught the process of working together. It's tough at the beginning. Now I'm one of the four teachers who are looping — that is, keeping the same students for two consecutive school years. And even with the looping, it's tough the first year. I'm looking forward to next year, because the second year is great. When you've had them for a year, there are a lot less problems. And I think their academic ability picks up the second year, too. As for helping each other, that's something you have to just keep telling them over and over, saying, "look how so and so are helping each other," and kind of trick them into doing it so they don't think that one is not as smart or one is the boss.* – Laura Maruniak, teacher

Some teachers still expressed commitment to MA classrooms and felt the benefits outweighed the challenges. Tara Carter was one of those teachers. She eloquently described how MA concepts pushed for more intense and substantive changes.

> *I feel that multi-age is something that you can see in your classroom, but with MI theory, you can close your door and just do what you were doing. Multi-age classes push you a little more to teach kids on an individualized basis, to gather materials at more than one level. That's why I like it. I see children progress from one grade to another.* – Tara Carter, teacher

But Tara adds this important caveat: "It is difficult during testing times." This difficulty was disclosed in many ways throughout the case study.

The redefinition of MA classrooms in terms of looping is one of the most evident inconsistencies in the Cranwood story. Individual teachers appeared to shape their concepts of MA to increase their comfort and assurance that students would successfully meet the demands of statewide proficiency testing. The influence of this high-stakes testing is examined in the next chapter.

Community-Service Learning Programming

1994-96: Extending the Classroom into Community Spaces

The Apprentice Program, the Mentor Program, Magic Friends, and the After-School Extended-Day Program were established as community-service learning classroom opportunities. Magic Friends, the intergenerational program, was a good starting point for community programming. It was visible, nurtured community support in positive ways, and gave Cranwood students opportunities to relate to older people. Working with the art consultant, Carolina Martin, also prompted curricular integration, as described in the close-up on Laura Maruniak.

In the first year of The Learning Project, Bev Veccia was teaching a multi-age classroom; her reflections on her class's participation in the Apprentice Program richly portray the two-way street of community interaction that Tim worked to create.

> *For eight weeks we went to the Health Museum once a week on Fridays. We actually had a classroom in an empty room, and we decorated it so it would be our own classroom. The children had mentors. We had a young lady in our class who was very personable; she was at the receptionist's desk, where she greeted visitors and answered telephones. At the end of the program we had a members' night — there were maybe 300 people there. We put on a play for them and made a copy of the displays that we actually put on exhibit.* – Bev Veccia, Lead Teacher

Successful community programs like the one experienced by Bev's class helped teachers feel comfortable that The Learning Project was working.

And Then . . . Community-Service Learning Becomes More Embedded in the Curriculum 1996-98 Years

The close-ups on Tara, Laura, and Megan O'Connorthat appear in Chapter Two offer rich descriptions of the nature of student learning in extended community contexts. These close-ups implicitly

demonstrate the benefits of this programming. Kelly Malone, the school psychologist, who has been with Cranwood since the beginning of Venture Capital funding, talked explicitly about the community broker position as Tim created it and the benefits she saw from the programming Tim was providing.

> *Our students don't see beyond their own particular setting. Tim is giving them the opportunity to see there's much more out there. A lot of the problems that kids come with are motivation. Many of the students highlighted in an article on the mentor program had academic problems and were referred to me. They were academically at a loss, but when they got out to the job in their community, they weren't; and that says something right there.*
> – Kelly Malone, school psychologist

Summary

The flow of change within the classroom context diverges in multiple directions. Some of the changes did not proceed in similar ways or extents, and much variation appeared even in the early years of The Learning Project. In the instance of MI theory, the descriptions displayed on paper — in documents and on the classroom walls — do not align with talk about MI theory, even in interviews with teachers about how their classrooms are different now compared with five years ago. Interestingly, the MI aspects of the Key School led to the development of the new report card; however, general talk about the report card is scarce, suggesting another twist in the story. Individual interpretations of MI theory and how to implement it emerge. This conceptual framework may be seamlessly embedded in the community-service learning programming and teachers' classroom instruction; or MI theory may be embraced as a critical aspect of The Learning Project by some and not given attention by others.

In contrast to MI theory, which is not overtly defined through talk about classrooms, the MA concept is inconsistently defined. For those who visited the Key School, MI theory implemented in MA classrooms made sense and offered recognized benefits for Cranwood students. For others, the move to MA classrooms was happening too fast. Because the MA concept was not originally part of the Venture Capital and Vision 21 discussion, but was added after some had seen it at work at the Key School, those who hadn't visited the Key School felt confused and overwhelmed. The looping proposals indicate increased variance of implementation through the years. For example, at the beginning of this case-study process, a visitor to Cranwood would see a variety of classroom structures, including same-age first grade, a looping same-age third grade that meets in a multi-age second/third grade grouping in the afternoon, and a multi-age fourth/fifth grade.

The community-service learning programming appeared to be steadily supported by the community broker, community participants, and many of Cranwood's teachers. Programs that began the first year of The Learning Project continued to be implemented at the time of this study. As the close-ups on Tara, Laura, and Megan demonstrate, these programs became increasingly embedded in the curriculum.

In the Corridors: The Context of Adults Working Together

Key changes in this context involve the forming of unique faculty positions such as the community broker and lead teacher, the creation of decision-making structures such as the Umbrella Committee and the Intervention Based Assessment team, and the pursuit of ongoing professional development. Table 2 maps each of these changes and the following sections elaborate on how they interrelate.

Table 2

Timeline of Changes in the Corridors: The Context of Adults Working Together

	1993-1994	1994-1996	1996-1998
New Faculty Positions: Community Broker and Lead Teacher	• two new positions are created by Vision 21 and Venture Capital	• Tim Harry is community broker • Judy Wright as lead teacher pushes for change	• Tim Harry continues as community broker • Bev Veccia as lead teacher leads from within
Decision-Making Structures	• Intervention Based Assessment (IBA) is piloted	• IBA continues	• IBA continues • classrooms relocated to facilitate collaboration • Umbrella Committee fosters increased communication
Professional Development	• Key School visit • Institute for Educational Renewal • external sources primarily tapped	• Institute for Educational Renewal continues • Judy provides theoretical framework and informally shares materials and resources • some teachers attend a statewide conference on MA concepts	• Bev provides practical classroom support and informally shares materials and resources • after-school session on fluency • internal sources tapped

Community Broker — The Person and the Position

Shaping the new position of community broker provided in Vision 21 was exciting, but not without challenges, particularly regarding others' perceptions of its purpose and function. Tim insightfully recalled and analyzed the complex process he designed and experienced to establish his new role.

> *All this new interaction and programming was largely due to the fact that Mrs. Block, our principal, gave me the freedom to go outside the building during the school day and use my talents to establish this kind of programming. For example, I was allowed to leave school and hold porch chats with neighbors, talk with personnel from the various institutions, talk to parents working at the school, visit museum and business sites. Most importantly, Mrs. Block allowed me the freedom to define the programming related to the Venture Capital plan and implement it. This was a new path for everyone involved, and my freedom did not go unnoticed. Teachers in the classroom began to criticize and become [suspicious] as to the actual duties I was performing. All they saw was someone leaving the building and coming back [unfettered] by classroom duties. They heard rumors that I had been to lunch with this museum or that large corporation. A sense of bad feeling invaded the building related to my position. People spoke in whispers, and the actual future of the position came under tight scrutiny. But Mrs. Block did not waver. It was her belief that the position was merited, and she was willing to let me sink or swim, despite the popularity or criticism I might receive.*
> —Tim Harry, Community Broker

The community broker position and the wide margin for self-definition extended to Tim by Mrs. Block created a significant strategy for change. How this position interacts with the lead teacher position is examined in the next section.

Lead Teacher — The People and the Position

1993-96: Judy Wright Provides Theoretical Base for The Learning Project

Judy Wright was one of the change agents of Cranwood. She attended the early Vision 21 meetings that explained the various community models. She was also instrumental in writing the Venture Capital Grant. It is not surprising that Judy was the first lead teacher at the Cranwood Learning Academy. Teachers who were part of the Cranwood faculty at this time consistently identified Judy as a key initiator of change. Judy worked to provide a strong theoretical base for The Learning Project components. However, while some were comfortable with her expectations, others felt she pushed too hard for classroom changes. She took major responsibility for staff development through formal presentations and informal sharing of materials and readings.

And Then . . . Bev Veccia Becomes Lead Teacher and Provides Practical Classroom Support

1996-98 School Years

"Leading from within" characterizes Bev's style. In her new role as lead teacher, she immediately involved herself in actual instruction of teachers in-house, often doing demonstration lessons in their classrooms. The leadership style Bev brings to her role is written between the lines of her description of how she turned a crowded storeroom into a resource room for teachers.

> *In the spring of 1996, when I got the lead teacher position for the following school year, I began to envision what room 114 would look like. I wanted it to be different from the way it had been the two previous years, when Judy and Tim shared the back of what was once entirely a book room. They had knocked down a few shelves and thrown away lots of old, unneeded papers and boxes. This area then became their office, a place to come back to as a home base to work quietly.*
>
> *Now at the beginning of this new school year, Tim had his own office in the center hallway, which had been a Title I reading room; so when I moved into room 114, I began to make changes. Yes, I was still working with a small area in the back of a book room where teachers continued to store anything and everything that they had no use for but thought that someday they might. I wanted this to become not my room, but our room, a resource room for teachers to look at materials and check out those that might be of use to them in their teaching. I also wanted this area to be a place where teachers could just come and relax, a quiet place away from the liveliness of the classroom and the hustle and bustle of the hallways. It soon became just that, and towards the end of my first year as lead teacher, in spring of 1997, I brought in a couch that gave the room more of a "homey" look. Colorful tablecloths, stuffed animals, and silk flower arrangements also added to the personal touch.* – Bev Veccia, Lead Teacher

Bev was also responsive to those teachers who felt they were being pushed too hard toward implementing MA classrooms. She was comfortable with the multiple ways teachers put theory into practice. She also supported teachers by providing resource materials and arranging visits to MA classrooms. As Laura noted in an interview, "Mrs. Veccia has been a great help with literature and books and visits to other buildings; she has done a beautiful job."

Consistent with the individual freedom Tim felt in defining the community-service learning programs, other changes at this time also reflect individual determination of change and Bev's support of them. Portfolio assessment and peer tutoring were areas of special attention, and Bev worked one-on-one with teachers to develop strategies in these areas. Weekly assemblies became individual workshops to address what teachers needed to complement their classroom instruction.

In her second year as lead teacher, Bev continued to make room 114 — the teacher resource room — more inviting to teachers, especially Cheryl Trebec when she became Title I mathematics teacher and set up her classroom in room 114. Bev described these changes in some detail.

> *In the fall of 1997, I decided to add a coffee pot and have the coffee ready each morning for the teachers when they came to work. It was an excuse for me to "pull" teachers in and show them our materials. It also allowed the entire staff to gather and talk, share stories and plan, or simply get geared in the proper mindset for another busy day. The copy machine, laminator, and book binder were also added to make our resource room "complete."*
>
> *In October, Cheryl became the Title I mathematics teacher, and because all the classrooms in the building were filled, we decided to knock down the rest of the shelves and make the remaining space a mathematics resource room. Cheryl worked endless hours dismantling shelves, removing screws from the floor, and throwing out old, rusty, useless junk. I took a couple days from my busy schedule to help her as best as I could. Room 114 soon became a place for students to learn and get the chance to work cooperatively in small groups with hands-on materials. Cheryl has taken on the role of not just a teacher, but a facilitator. She gives her students choices in their learning, and she guides them in the right direction. The children thoroughly enjoy coming to her class and are upset when mathematics classes are canceled due to testing or meetings. Cheryl often calls me over to see what her students are doing and she takes pride in their work. She joins in with them and works along. Children are more eager to learn when their teacher shows enthusiasm in the learning process and models appropriate and high expectations. I did the same with my students when I had my own classroom.*
>
> *On days when mathematics classes are not being held in room 114, the room takes on still another perspective. Our psychologists, Tom and Kelly, and this year's intern, Brian, use the room for testing children and conferencing with supervisors, teachers, parents, and students. Room 114 has become a center where children come for guidance and help, or to talk out difficulties. I feel my role as lead teacher has extended to counselor, because I assist with students who are struggling academically and especially behaviorally. As you can see, room 114 is used as an outlet for adults and children alike to talk, learn, share, eat, drink, or just escape.* – Bev Veccia, Lead Teacher

Decision-Making Structures

Committee structures and even physical classroom placement in the building are changes that affect how decisions are made. We discuss the most salient examples here.

1993-98: Intervention Based Assessment

One of the clearest pictures of collaborative decision making — the Intervention Based Assessment team — was presented in the close-ups on Kelly and Bev in Chapter Two. The Intervention Based Assessment (IBA) team has a strong history in Cranwood and, as documented in Chapter Two, the process has evolved to serve multiple purposes. The team regularly considers and plans interventions for individual students; in 1998 it also engaged in inquiry to inform curricular decisions for all third graders through the reading fluency screening. In an interview that took place in June of 1998, Kelly talked about the changes she has seen since the IBA team has been functioning at Cranwood.

> *The team effort over the years has increased. I see that going out to classrooms too — the willingness to share materials, the willingness to accept difficult students in classrooms, the willingness to participate in the fluency pilot project, the willingness to share with other teams.* – Kelly Malone, school psychologist

And Then . . . Faculty Committees are Formed and Classrooms are Rearranged to Increase Communication and Collaborative Decision Making

1996-98 School Years

Bev's intention for teachers to work together that is evident in her arrangement of the teacher resource room also prompted changes in classroom locations. She recalled:

> *At the beginning of the school year, I said, "Everybody is everywhere. You go into the hallway and we have fifth graders and we have the first graders, and we have third graders. In order for the teachers to work together, they have to be together." So we made this end [the library rotunda area] the grade three, four, five wing; in the center hall we have grades two and three; more toward the gym we have grades kindergarten, one; and [in the gym rotunda area] we have grades one and two. So everybody is kind of looking for things to do together and planning during lunch. I hear them sitting in here [room 114], talking and planning.* – Bev Veccia, Lead Teacher

This classroom relocation facilitated collaboration and communication. For example, the second- and third-grade teachers, whose classrooms are located in the center hall, were the first to propose a looping arrangement. Bev also furthered communication by preparing a weekly calendar of events (see "This Week at Cranwood," p. 44).

The creation of the Umbrella Committee, which consists of representatives from other building committees and all grade levels, was another change during the 1996-97 school year that was made in response to a call for increased communication. Concerns raised in grade-level meetings — comments, complaints, or suggestions — are looked at by the Umbrella Committee. A typical meeting of this committee addressed lunchroom procedures, art supplies, staffing alternatives, (e.g., mathematics and reading Title I teachers, science resource teacher), and building security. This committee agreed to address faculty and staff concerns that emerged through a district-mandated survey.

Monday, Sept. 29

8:45 A.M. — Room 131: Umbrella Committee Meeting

Mr. Harry invited to Columbus by Governor Voinovich for a press release about Cranwood. CONGRATULATIONS, TIM, & TO ALL OUR SCHOOL FAMILY!!!

3:00 P.M. – 7:00 P.M. — Mrs. Block & Bev to CIE Meeting (Cleveland Initiative on Education)

Tuesday, Sept. 30

IBA Meeting — 8:30 A.M. Teacher's Lounge

Have students turn in their answers to Bev for September "Figure It Out" bulletin board

Wednesday, Oct. 1

Attendance notebooks due in to office

Mrs. Beasley's class to Maple Care

Thursday, Oct 2

Transportation Drill — 10:00 A.M.

Friday, Oct 3

10:30 A.M. and 11:00 A.M. — Two assemblies for Champion Candy Kick-Off — sign up in office

Book inventories due in office

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* Thanks, Mrs. Trebec, for bringing us exciting news about SchoolNet from your computer meeting. A full report on SchoolNet progress will come from Mrs. Block and Mrs. Trebec at the October faculty meeting.
* October 6 – October 10 — ADM I Week - PLEASE PUSH STUDENT ATTENDANCE
* October 16 — SLT cancelled
* SLT rescheduled for Thursday, October 30, at 9:00 A.M.
* Wednesday, October 8, 10:00 A.M. — SCC Meeting

***FACULTY MEETING WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 8 AT 9:00 A.M. — ROOM 131

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Professional Development

When Cranwood faculty and staff tell their change story, professional development is a frequently included element. Several professional-development events are mentioned again and again in informal conversation, in interviews, and in written reflections and documents.

1993-95: Staff Development Comes Primarily from Outside Sources

The visit to Gardner's Key School in the summer of 1994 is the most frequently mentioned staff-development event in Cranwood's history; none since have come close to having the impact of this event. Some faculty visited during the summer of 1994, and several others visited later that year while the school was in session. These members of Cranwood faculty directly connect that site visit to MI and MA components and identify the visits as significant professional-development events. Of the nine faculty members who visited the Key School, only five remained at Cranwood during the 1997-98 school year, lessening the effect of the visit on current conceptualization and implementation of MI and MA components. For teachers who did not visit the Key School, Judy Wright arranged visits to area Montessori schools to observe multi-age in that setting. In addition, those who had visited the Key School provided weekly assemblies for students that tapped various intelligences; this was modeled after similar programs observed at the Key School and intended to provide common planning time for teachers. Judy also provided pertinent readings from professional literature.

The Institute for Educational Renewal provided the earliest professional development in the Cranwood story. This consortium of university professors became available to facilitate classroom teachers' preparation for making changes, and teachers were relieved by this promise of support as they faced the many challenges inherent in change.

And Then . . . Staff Development Attends to Daily Issues and Needs 1995-96 School Year

During the early years of The Learning Project, groups of teachers attended an annual statewide MA conference, but responses to this professional-development event were not described with the enthusiasm and excitement used to describe the Key School visit. The teachers interviewed for this case study made no mention of this annual conference. During one of the case team meetings, Cheryl Trebec and Bev Veccia agreed that the staff showed declining interest in attending because it was not providing new information.

In the second year of Venture Capital funding, Judy coordinated staff-development experiences such as the ongoing collaborative study with the Institute for Educational Renewal. The use of space and time in the school day was addressed in staff-development sessions, and interdisciplinary approaches within larger blocks of time were presented. The flexible roles of both lead teacher and community broker allowed for more extended conversations with faculty and community to support problem-solving efforts.

And Then . . . Staff Development Also Comes from the Inside

1996-98 School Years

During the case-study team meetings, team members frequently commented that there was expertise within the Cranwood faculty that could be shared. The idea of Cranwood participants providing professional development for each other emerged. For example, Cheryl and Bev attended district-wide mathematics meetings and shared what they learned with the Cranwood faculty.

Although external staff-development sources continued to be tapped, they were not sustained over time or received with the enthusiasm given the Key School visit. Each August, the Cranwood faculty and staff are invited to participate in a day-long professional-development session that Bev arranges in response to teacher comments. For example, teachers heard a particularly engaging speaker at an Ohio Multi-age Conference and requested this person be sought for the Cranwood session. In another instance of staff development, Jackie's participation in the Intervention Based Assessment fluency screening session led to Mrs. Block's request for her to provide a short session on fluency.

Summary

Although the twists and turns that occurred in the corridor context may appear to be more subtle, they contribute significantly to the complexity of Cranwood's change story. The new faculty positions created by Vision 21 plans — community broker and lead teacher — are focal points of the variances and inconsistencies. Tim Harry, the community broker, and Judy and/or Bev, the lead teachers, were consistently named as key initiators of change by the teachers and staff interviewed in this case study. Tim broke new ground in developing his role as community broker and the service learning programs for Cranwood students. His freedom to define his role did not go unnoticed. The two lead teachers had different leadership styles, and although some teachers were comfortable with Judy's presentation of theory and direct push for change, others indicate she pushed too hard. Bev adopted a style that was less directive, more inclusive, more practically oriented, and more tolerant of varied implementation of The Learning Project components.

Multiple paths of decision making also add to the complexity of the Cranwood story. The Intervention Based Assessment team, piloted prior to The Learning Project, remained viable and strong by providing a forum for parent, teacher, psychologist, and community volunteer to make decisions together. Another vehicle for decision making recently emerged to address problems and tensions that occurred: the Umbrella Committee.

The flow of professional development moved from formal to informal formats. The Key School visit and IER support were quite structured and were frequently and enthusiastically mentioned as having a positive influence on change; the informal professional development that occurred one-on-one was mentioned less frequently.

In the Community: The Context of a Wider Network of Stakeholders

The Cranwood change story has an intriguing history, and the interaction of its stakeholders over time is difficult to ascertain. The subtle nuances of behind-the-scenes decision making beg to be understood. Table 3 is our attempt to portray the external forces and the role of neighborhood, the wider community, and parents in making decisions about how students learn and how adults work together at Cranwood. The text that follows takes a closer look.

Table 3 **Timeline of Changes in the Community: The Context of a Wider Network of Stakeholders**

	1993-1994	1994-1996	1996-1998
External forces	• Vision 21 • Venture Capital	• Venture Capital • Ohio Proficiency Tests	• Venture Capital • Academic Achievement Plan • *Off-year* proficiency tests
Role of neighborhood, wider community, and parents	• community broker establishes interaction with neighborhood and community stakeholders	• community broker continues interaction with community	• lead teacher invites parent participation

External Forces

Much of the Cranwood change story is encoded in the internally written plans that have been discussed in preceding sections of this chapter. But external forces that play a role in the change story are also evident.

1993-94 School Year: Vision 21 and Venture Capital Lead to "The Learning Project"

Vision 21 and Venture Capital were outside forces that became encoded in the documents written by Cranwood faculty. They prompted and funded the dialogue that led to the design of their unique learning project that melded several models — Multiple Intelligences theory, community-service learning, Afro-centric curriculum, performance-based assessment — and created the two distinct additional

positions of community broker and lead teacher. As previously stated, the district approved this unique plan because Cranwood had garnered Venture Capital funding.

And Then . . . Ohio Proficiency Tests

1994-98 School Years

The increased influence of the Ohio Proficiency Tests (OPTs) is seen in various ways. Scores are widely published and contribute to the grade given individual schools. Public interest in performance on these tests is high. Cranwood Learning Academy's OPT scores were one of the indicators that earned its recognition as one of seven top performing Cleveland public schools; the need to maintain this high status reciprocally contributed to increased focus on proficiency-test preparation (see Goal III of the Academic Achievement Plan, Appendix B.) Now the Cleveland school district has contracted to have *off-year* tests (for grades not mandated for OPTs) written and scored; even first graders take an annual paper-pencil test of proficiency.

The Role of Neighborhood, Community, and Parents

1993-96: The Community Broker Establishes Ties With Stakeholders

The community broker position was written into the plan because of commitment to the belief that students benefit when the school and community work together. Tim's detailed recollections of his experience in establishing this critical interaction with the community stakeholders the first year capture a significant moment in Cranwood's story.

> *One of the major changes was the establishment of a community liaison, deemed the community broker. In this position I was to work directly with the community in order to bring a "two-way street" of community interaction. I worked with the obvious community partners such as parents and guardians, but I also established programs to enhance ties with business, cultural institutions, the elderly, religious organizations, places of higher learning, fraternities, foundations, health organizations, and the government. Intergenerational programs, mentoring and apprenticeship programs, after-school programs, assembly and workshop programs, and artist resident programs were established in Venture's first year.*
>
> *Before any program was established, however, careful community roundtables were held at different sites. Government and local business leaders, religious and fraternal organization leaders, and parents met at a local computer business during the day hours in the first year of Venture Capital funding. I used a variety of techniques based on asset building theory, which recognizes the assets or gifts the stakeholders possess, whether they be individuals, citizen associations, or local institutions. I posed a question through various creative methods, such as, "What is it that you can give? What talents do you possess?" When the asset question is posed, a wealth of materials and supplies bubbles to the top. Notice I did not ask, "What is it that you need?" Needs-based questions are asked later.*

Here's an example. At one of the meetings, a representative from the local electric utility company sat at the table. When the needs were announced, the overriding concern was that the neighborhood desired to have lights shine on the building at night. Since the school was not illuminated at night, years of roof-top drinking and damaging of the school's air-conditioning units had occurred. The neighbors used safety as a priority. The local utility representative heard this and simply stated that if we filled out the necessary paperwork, he would be able to rush the project through. Within two months, new telephone poles were being put up around the building with high-wattage lights attached. The night the lights were turned on, a sense of victory was felt and the roundtable discussions felt a surge of power. The cost of new lighting was eliminated for the school, a serious problem was answered in a speedy and effective manner, and the important safety question for all neighbors was addressed. This question was asked at the next roundtable discussion: "Who is not at this table that should be?" Immediately, a search by stakeholders led to calls and requests for more to be invited to these thought-provoking and problem-solving sessions. – Tim Harry, Community Broker

And Then . . . Bev Veccia Invites More Parent Participation

1996-98 School Years

Just as Bev opened room 114 to teachers and students, she opened Cranwood to more parent involvement through programs such as Donuts for Dad and Muffins for Mom. Bev articulated the impetus behind these programs:

This year we tried to do a lot more of what parents requested that we do, either before school or after school, to get more involved in their children's feelings. We did a Donuts for Dad. There were about 150 people in the student cafeteria; there was standing room only! It wasn't just for dads. It was for any male — a grandfather, a big brother. They came and had donuts, coffee, and juice. And they did art projects with the kids. Tim talked a little bit about the Mentor Program and I talked a little bit about Family Proficiency Night. It was neat. It really was. – Bev Veccia, Lead Teacher

Kelly Malone also talked about these highly attended parent programs. From her perspective as school psychologist, she sees more parental participation but would like to see even more. Another way Cranwood welcomed parents was through the creation of a parent center in a portion of Tim's room. Mrs. Smith, PTA president, and her daughter were often seen working to prepare this room for parent interaction within the school.

Summary

There is ample evidence that the mandated Ohio Proficiency Tests forced a changed direction in multi-age implementation. There is also evidence of Cranwood's struggle to maintain its course through

an equally strong community network of support. While individuals shaped their own routes to implement components of The Learning Project in the midst of high-stakes testing, Cranwood stakeholders energetically engaged in program refinement and further development.

Twists and Turns across Contexts

Although this chronology may on the surface suggest a steady flow of connected activity, closer examination of the events reveals inconsistencies and changed directions. Varying multi-age classroom structures and the change in lead teachers are salient examples of changed directions across contexts.

The MA classroom became part of The Learning Project as a result of several teachers' visit to the Key School prior to the 1994 school year. Some embraced its concept more thoroughly than others. As The Learning Project continued, the Ohio Proficiency Tests mandated for specific grades increasingly influenced routes that moved away from multi-age. Teachers proposed looping as an alternative.

Another change in direction occurred when the responsibilities of lead teacher passed from Judy Wright to Bev Veccia. Many Cranwood teachers indicated that Judy pushed too hard for change, and Bev's way of leading from within supported teachers in comfortably shaping their own routes toward change. Throughout the case study, Tim consistently asked evaluative questions such as, "are we doing MA or not?" and Bev consistently spoke to its varied implementation, offering the looping structure as a viable form of the MA concept. Tim remained firm in his belief that not all teachers who thought they were implementing the MA concept were actually doing so, and he cautioned that Bev's view was too optimistic.

Infused through all contexts is the room for individual definitions and directions inherent in the Vision 21 and Venture Capital plans. Autonomy is highly regarded by Cranwood faculty and staff, but as the demand to be accountable to external forces has increased, the room to shape individual routes toward change has diminished.

Chapter Four

Autonomy and Accountability: Competing Forces of Change

Clandinin and Connelly (1994) write about the temptation for researchers to let field texts, like those that appear in the close-ups and in the twists and turns of previous chapters, stand alone to tell the story, but they go on to say that researchers must "discover and construct meaning in those texts" (p. 423). This chapter embodies the case team's efforts to discover and construct meaning in our field texts. We ask what the vignettes, the close-ups, and the twists and turns of the Cranwood story tell us about the nature of changes in learning and teaching experienced here. We present multiple interpretations of the story viewed through the lens of research and theory on change processes. We raise questions and pose possible answers. Further, we invite you, the reader, to join us in discovering and constructing meaning in the Cranwood story.

Understanding the Story through its Tensions

Case team meetings centered around discussion of themes we saw in our field texts. The case team agreed that *multiple* described the overarching theme that emerged through our study. The Cranwood Learning Project was born in the belief that multiple school models provided the best fit for the Cranwood students, adults, and neighborhood; this is clearly evident in the Vision 21 and Venture Capital plans that incorporated components from several models. *Multiple* is also a concept embedded in the models chosen; the Theory of Multiple Intelligences recognizes that students are smart in multiple ways, and multi-age classrooms group students of multiple ages. Further, at Cranwood there is an inherent acceptance of the multiple ways individuals and groups may choose to implement the various models. For example, some teachers and students work in multi-age settings; others in a combination of age-graded classrooms and multi-age settings; and still others in same-age classrooms only. It is as if *multiple* is an expected factor in how students learn and how teachers teach. Indeed, the integrity of Cranwood's Learning Project may very well rest in the consistency of this multiple factor that appears throughout the study. The school principal's sensitivity toward individual differences regarding the scope and speed of change is a significant example.

The mutual respect for individual autonomy that fostered development of multiple directions and rates of change at Cranwood is tempered by accountability to broader external forces. Vision 21 and Venture Capital together provided for local determination of change. Although the variances and inconsistencies that resulted were frustrating to some (e.g., Tim Harry's questioning of multi-age implementation), the underlying regard for autonomy was unchallenged (e.g., the enduring freedom of the community broker and lead teacher to define and shape their roles). Even as more stakeholders were added to Cranwood's network (e.g., the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum and parents through programs such as Donuts for Dad), the regard for autonomy remained firm. Ultimately, it was pressure from a more distant, mandatory force — the Ohio Proficiency Test — that challenged the status of individual autonomy and intensified the tensions in Cranwood's change story.

Tension as a Companion of Change

For most of us, it is not easy or comfortable to talk about tensions in our work or group interactions. Writing about them is even more difficult, which explains why so many stories tell the successes without describing the tensions worked through to achieve them. Research on change processes finds that tension is a natural and necessary component (Hall & Loucks, 1978). The case team recognized this and agreed to use the tensions to reach deeper understanding of our observations at Cranwood. Our intent is not to criticize, but to bring to the surface the fullest and most accurate understanding of the Cranwood story that is possible through our study.

The Interacting Tensions of Autonomy and Accountability

We found that adults worked together at Cranwood in many ways: through the Umbrella Committee and the Intervention Based Assessment team; through community-service learning and volunteer programs; through tireless revision of plans to align with district and state policies; and through their own beliefs of how best to learn and teach. They worked to be accountable to each other — to the students, their parents, and the community — and to the sociopolitical agenda of the state and district. And through all of this working together, they struggled to maintain a high degree of autonomy; therein lies the tension.

The case team identified the tension of autonomy in the classroom context through our discussions of teacher freedom to make individual or small-group decisions. This is particularly evident in the multi-age/looping changes that impact classroom interactions. In one way, teacher freedom is a benefit in that teachers can work in more personally comfortable and fitting ways; it supports their personal maps for change (Fullan & Miles, 1992). But in another way, teacher freedom lessens the likelihood of shared ownership and similar implementation of theory and programs throughout the building. In addition, too much freedom of choice (autonomy) can lead to lack of coherence. Coupled with the pressure to perform well on the statewide tests, frustration is likely to result (Hargreaves & Fullan, 1998). Fullan (1996) argues that "fragmentation" occurs when opportunities and pressures to change are in

conflict. At Cranwood, teachers have many opportunities to engage in learning and teaching in innovative ways; however they also feel the pressure of grade-level proficiency testing.

Autonomy may also explain why so few teachers who have worked in multi-age settings actually talked about it when asked to describe how their classrooms were different now from several years ago, or why none of those interviewed explicitly gave specific examples of how Multiple Intelligences theory has changed their teaching, even though this was the framework used to construct the new report card. For some, infusion of these ideas may be seamless or too obvious to discuss. But for others, these ideas may not have maintained a prominent position in their individual maps for change.

Looking at *corridor* interactions, the freedom extended to the lead teachers and community broker to shape their roles presents an interesting direction. With the community programming, Tim appeared to work from the outside in. He often described *his* decision making and arrangement of programs that he brings *to* the teachers. Conversely, Bev Veccia appeared to work from the inside out, such as with selected teachers, parents, and the school psychologists. Bev prepares demonstration lessons and materials, clears trays and tables in the lunch room, and completes district routines for Mrs. Block, the principal. Tim is often visible in high-profile settings, such as matching students with their mentors at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum and being featured in publications, such as *Ohio Magazine* (Lenhoff & Simpson, 1998), that document his work with Cranwood students and community programs. In these examples too, Bev's and Tim's work with and for Cranwood students respectively reflects *inside-out* and *outside-in* directions.

Indication of the tension between Tim as community broker and Bev as lead teacher appears in the way they talked about their programs: they did not use words that indicate joint or shared ownership. They did not make references to "our" programs as often as references to "my" programming or proficiency classes. In June, the twelfth month of the case study, Tim announced he was leaving Cranwood to take a position at a local independent film organization. As he and Bev discussed the possible ramifications of Cranwood's search for a community broker/science resource teacher and the new description of the position, Bev assured Tim, "We won't let your programs die." In the instance of these two very distinct and unique positions that significantly contribute to the twists and turns in Cranwood's story, we must question that the degree of autonomy they experience may be working against joint ownership. Although the efforts of Tim and Bev may well have created pockets of success, there is scant evidence in the change literature that these individual efforts combine to promote sustained change when the key people are no longer involved (Fullan & Miles, 1992).

Additional tensions presented as the locus of accountability shifted from students and parents to colleagues to the more distant state mandates, making individual autonomy increasingly difficult to maintain. Externally, the need to maintain the Ohio Proficiency Test (OPT) high-performing status is strong. Many teachers mentioned the tension created by the OPTs; these grade-level tests, which are used as high-risk accountability measures of students *and* teachers in Ohio's schools, are theoretically at odds

with the concept of continuous growth that undergirds non-graded or multi-age classrooms. There is evidence that the OPTs are a force of change: they were named in the rationale for the looping proposal, and they were alluded to by Tara Carter as making multi-age difficult to implement. This suggests that the OPTs in some ways thwarted the change initiatives begun at Cranwood through Vision 21 and Venture Capital funding. The OPTs exert force in other ways too: for example, a Family Proficiency Night was included in the Academic Achievement Plan.

The Vision 21 and Venture Capital plans were written to accommodate the unique features of the Cranwood students, families, and neighborhood history. This resulted in the unique combination of elements of different models called The Learning Project. Accountability to parents and community is also evident in many of the key decisions made by Cranwood participants. The Donuts for Dad event, the after-school program, and the neighborhood flower planting by Megan O'Connor's class are excellent examples of how much the community matters and how authentically Cranwood responds.

The tension of accountability interacts with the tension of autonomy to create competing forces of change. Research and theory of change processes address these forces and how they work in various settings. Reading these forces through the lens of the professional literature on change is helpful in understanding Cranwood's story.

Competing Forces of Change

In their analysis of "what works and what doesn't" in school reform, Fullan and Miles (1992) discuss aspects of change that have particular relevance to the Cranwood story. First, they suggest that personal maps of change are at best contradictory and at worst inaccurate. The degree of autonomy afforded the community broker, the lead teacher, and the classroom teachers at Cranwood presents considerable barriers to shared purpose and, even more, to connected and consistent implementation. This is most visible in the varied understandings and implementation of multi-age classrooms.

Varied understandings of resistance to change relate to this aspect of personal maps. Fullan and Miles (1992) write that, "it seems natural to attribute progress that is slower than we might wish" to "resistance" (p. 748). Tim's impatience with the varied implementation of multiple intelligence theory or multi-age classrooms could be viewed as an example of misunderstood resistance to change. Alternatively, Mrs. Block and Bev Veccia appear to accept these varied approaches as part of the process; their patience with individual teachers' definitions and implementations of The Learning Project components lend critical support in working through the uncertainties of the change process. They nurture teachers' continuous examination, exploration, and informed experimentation as they seek to improve their classroom practice and their students' achievement.

Tim often described "strong individuals" as playing critical roles in the Cranwood change story. Fullan and Miles (1992) describe this aspect as "pockets of success" (p. 748). They provide evidence

that these strong individuals indeed can affect significant changes in classrooms and schooling, but also report that there is a lack of evidence that these changes are sustained when conditions change (i.e., key people leave the setting). It is noteworthy that a change in definition and implementation of multi-age concepts occurred when the lead teacher position moved from Judy to Bev. Those more comfortable with Bev's *leading from within* (or Judy's strong push toward change) felt support for their personal maps for change; those uncomfortable with Bev's patience for a range of implementations (or Judy's specific definitions) saw inconsistency and even a broken front in the change process, as they understood it.

The tension between individual and collective decision making is another interesting feature of change. Fullan (1993) proposes that teachers need to recognize and accept that this tension exists in cultures engaged in change, and that by doing so, they will be able to position themselves to be effective both as individuals and as part of the group. Mrs. Block understands and accepts varying rates of change; she is willing to entertain alternative proposals that may affect changes in direction. She supports teachers' personal stances within the change process and helps them variously act as members of a group or as individuals. For example, she supported the collaborative looping of grade two and three teachers, but she also accepted Tim's and Bev's individual shaping of their roles.

From the perspective of Fullan and Miles (1992), two varied interpretations of the Cranwood story can be drawn. One interpretation may view Cranwood as trying to "account for the complexity of the situation with an equally complex implementation plan" that ultimately renders the process "unwieldy, cumbersome, and usually unsuccessful" (p. 749). This presents the risk that individual expression and implementation may become so broad as to make common effort impossible. Jackie Peck's difficulty in identifying connections between the multiple components aligns with this interpretation. Conversely, another interpretation may view the Cranwood process as "a journey in which people's sense of purpose is identified, considered, and continuously shaped and reshaped" (p. 749). Bev's description of the consensual decision-making process is consistent with this interpretation; however, it was difficult to establish this interpretation beyond Bev's description of the process.

The links between teacher autonomy and student achievement also need to be addressed, because they explain some of the things not said and not observed through this Cranwood story. Marks and Louis (1997) find that teacher autonomy can positively influence efforts to improve classroom practice, but the connections across contexts — classroom and corridor — are complex, indirect, and difficult to measure. In this case study, the change forces figured predominantly in the corridor context but were less prevalent in the classroom context; the multiple-intelligences component was visible in the report card but difficult to determine in classroom practice as reported by the teachers.

Fullan and Miles (1992) address another aspect of the Cranwood change story. They cite solutions to change that lack depth and thoroughness. A specific example could be statewide testing mandates that "narrowed the curriculum and created adverse conditions for reform" (p. 747). The Cranwood story describes the tension between Venture Capital change initiatives and Ohio Proficiency Testing. This

is also documented in Merz and Furman (1997), who describe a shift in focus from schools as communities to schools as bureaucracies. Hargreaves and Fullan (1998) speak in terms of tensions and contradictions that teachers experience when they shape schools as caring communities that struggle under the influence of bureaucratic pressures. Clark and Astuto (1994) suggest that lasting school reform will be realized only by maximizing teachers' abilities and minimizing bureaucracies that derail their efforts. This case study documented ways the caring community of Cranwood struggled under the influence of bureaucratic pressure. We found that teacher autonomy to continuously evaluate and improve classroom practice was minimized by the increasingly bureaucratic influence of the high-stakes mandatory testing.

A Closing Comment

The Cranwood story is complex, fascinating, and difficult to tell. It would require volumes to tell in its entirety. We have tried to present a cross-section of characters and events with enough breadth and depth to enable you to come to your own conclusions. We have offered various interpretations that we will consider and ponder as the Cranwood Learning Project continues to evolve.

EPILOGUE

AUGUST 1998: CRANWOOD LEARNING ACADEMY OPENS ITS DOORS TO ANOTHER YEAR OF CHANGE

Changes are evident, some more than others. Here they are in brief.

- Tim Harry has taken a position with a local independent film organization.
- The new community broker works to support those programs on a half-day basis; the remainder of the time he serves as a science resource teacher.
- Bev Veccia is continuing in her role as lead teacher.
- Cheryl Trebec is continuing as the Title I mathematics teacher. She carefully studied the previous year's proficiency test scores and proposed to the principal that all fourth graders be grouped in same-age classrooms.
- Laura Maruniak is teaching third grade to the children who were in her second-grade class last year. But the second-grade teacher who was looping with her has taken a media specialist position in another building, so there is currently no one who is continuing the looping format with Laura.
- Tara Carter took a position in a year-round school in the district.
- The school psychologists have been reassigned to establish Intervention Based Assessment teams in other buildings, now that Cranwood has developed its team so well.
- A reading specialist for the primary grades has been hired by the district to service each building.
- Dorann Block remains as the building principal.
- The flowers planted by Megan O'Connor's students are still in bloom and they color the neighborhood beautifully!

Many of these changes reflect the force of accountability to external mandates, namely the Ohio Proficiency Tests. The science resource teacher is needed to help increase student performance on the science portion. The reading teacher was also hired to increase student performance on the OPTs. The same-age fourth grades are intended to provide focused preparation for the tests the students will be taking next March. Tara foreshadowed her departure by stating she wasn't sure what she wanted to do the next year, because testing time made multi-age learning and teaching so difficult.

Absent from this list of changes is attention to some original features of the Vision 21 and Venture Capital plans. The external force heavily outweighs the internal choices and decisions to create a unique learning academy that meets the needs of its students. The argument could be made that the tests are promoting better instruction and more focused instruction for the students who need it most. Indeed, in some instances, such as the hiring of a reading and science teacher, this is difficult to challenge.

However, other equally important aspects of learning and development not tested through the OPTs, such as self-confidence and self-esteem, peaceful conflict management, or compassion toward the elderly, may be lost or diminished, again for the very students who stand to benefit most from these experiences. The predominant force now appears to be meeting needs defined by the OPTs. The proposition that this sufficiently serves Cranwood children best has yet to be examined.

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APPENDIX A
METHODOLOGY

As one of 12 Ohio Venture Capital schools selected to participate in the Transforming Learning Communities (TLC) project, Cranwood Learning Academy engaged in a year-long inquiry into its process of change. Case team members began to shape a plan for the study in August 1997. From their beginning conversations, the team recognized that the study design would evolve over time and intentionally accounted for this in the plan. This evolution is reflected in our methodology as I, Jackie, describe it in this appendix.

The case team discussed several foci of the study. The first, evaluative in intent and quickly rejected as being inconsistent with the larger TLC purpose, questioned Cranwood's progress with multi-age concepts. Building on the TLC framework, the team next focused on participants' understandings of Cranwood as a community of learners *(in the classroom)*, a community of adults working to improve student learning *(in the corridors)*, and a community of vested decision makers *(in the boardroom/community)*. Through the course of the study and with feedback from Dennis Thiessen, TLC co-director, we began to ask broader questions such as,

What is Cranwood's change story?

What do we see now at Cranwood that we wouldn't have seen five years ago?

What drives these changes?

The case team considered the data we could collect to gain some answers to our questions. We wanted to collect multiple types of data from multiple sources to increase the study's credibility (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Merriam, 1988). We also wanted the data collection to be naturalistic and as non-invasive as possible.

We planned observations to help us understand the current routines and events of Cranwood. I kept detailed field notes of faculty, committee, and PTA meetings; classroom and daytime school events; and evening parent events. I used an observation frame that attended to interactions in multiple dimensions (e.g., student-to-student, student-to-teacher, service learning provider-to-student, teacher-to-parent), structures (e.g., multi-age organizations, physical classroom arrangements, joint planning time for teachers), and evidence of decision-making processes (e.g., committees reaching consensus on school-wide issues; community broker and lead teacher engaged in joint problem solving).

We searched multiple documents to capture a historical account of Cranwood's process. We found many, including *The Learning Project* and the annual *Academic Achievement Plans*. In addition to these doc-

uments, at Tim Harry's suggestion, we considered using a timeline technique (Ainscow, Hargreaves & Hopkins, 1995) to get historical retrospectives from the entire staff; however, Tim had difficulty getting it in place, and the results he did gather were less than productive.

We relied on semi-structured, open-ended interviews, perhaps too heavily, to garner participants' own stories. We talked with those who had the insight of many years of involvement in Cranwood's change process and several who brought the freshness of their first year of experience. We used the following questions to guide the telling of the participant's change story:

1. *From your perspective, who were the key initiators of change? What is their role now? Who has been left out or who opted out of the change process?*
2. *What do you see today in your classroom or in Cranwood overall that you didn't see happening five years ago? Describe a particular incident that comes to mind. Describe it in such a way that I can picture it almost like a film clip. What was the setting? Who was there? What was the interaction like? What was going on?*
3. *How did changes you've experienced take place? How did it happen?*
4. *Describe how you think your classroom or Cranwood overall will look five years from now.*

The plan was designed collaboratively by the team. We also engaged in collaborative data analysis. Analysis was ongoing and concurrent with data collection. We questioned what we were finding at case team meetings and during sporadic, informal conversations with each other. We originally planned to give Cranwood participants some feedback on the study, but we did not meet our expectations in a formal sense. However, because three of the case team members were on the Cranwood staff, they simultaneously received feedback and were able to provide some informally to their peers. We had also planned to engage in staff-development activities vis-à-vis the study. But early in the school year, the principal discouraged this; the staff had formed a concerns committee in response to some needs indicated through a district survey, and she felt it was not an appropriate time to embark on additional staff development.

In April of 1998, we had collected transcriptions (ten interviews and one lengthy case team meeting), minutes of other case team meetings, field notes (three service learning events, a faculty meeting, an Intervention Based Assessment team meeting, a schoolwide portfolio sharing, and Family Proficiency Night), and an array of documents such as proposals, program descriptions, and a classroom newspaper. We conducted a more formal inductive analysis of these data. First we read for patterns and regularities (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) to form tentative categories that we refined through the constant-comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). I played with metaphor and graphic devices (Bogdan & Bicklin, 1982) and shared these with the team as we grappled with how to make sense of the data and identify the pervading themes. Feedback from the TLC directors and other participants in June of 1998 and further conversation with Tim about how to tell a coherent story prompted me to tap into personal-expe-

rience methodology (Clandinin & Connelly, 1994). These combined methodologies led to the case report in Chapters One to Four of this work.

Our plan for the study also included dissemination to a wider audience. Tim and I will present our findings at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association. Results of our study will be included in various TLC publications. Statewide, this report is also being distributed to schools by the Ohio Department of Education.

A collaborative team formed during the process of this study. It is my hope, as a university researcher committed to ongoing positive change in urban schools (Peck, 1995; Peck, Peck, Sentz, & Zasa, in press), that our collaboration continues. I see my research role as that of a collaborator who helps teachers examine their own beliefs and practices (Kagan, 1993). I have learned much through our interaction, and I strive for mutual benefits for the staff, students, and parents at Cranwood.

APPENDIX B
ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT PLAN

The Academic Achievement Plan is a spiral-bound booklet that identifies Cranwood's goals for the academic year. Accompanying each goal are performance objectives, strategies, and a work plan that addresses who is responsible for working toward the goal, dates, completion status, evidence of achievement, and expected cost. A summary of the 1997-98 Academic Achievement Plan goals and sample strategies appear below.

Goal I: Students will be able to perform computer programming and technical skills at grade level with the implementation of School Net.

Strategies:

- computers in every classroom
- access to the Internet in every classroom
- up-to-date software programs which teach the children to think and to use the computer as a learning tool

Goal II: Teachers and parents will work together for excellent attendance.

The number of Cranwood Learning Academy students participating in service learning will increase.

Strategies:

- each class doing a service learning project
- attendance/citizenship incentive plan
- incentives for parent/child working together — Muffins for Mom and Donuts for Dad — held before or after school hours in conjunction with Cranwood's PTA

Goal III: By the year 2000, students will annually increase their success rates on the proficiency tests.

Teachers will instruct students in the multiple-intelligences curriculum within the classroom.

Along with teaching the multiple-intelligences curriculum, teachers will incorporate other unique teaching methods. (See Goal V for strategies.)

Strategies:

- teaching of Howard Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences — everyone can learn in eight different ways
- teachers will develop their own interim tests in core subject areas to coincide with skills and format of test questions on the proficiency tests
- purchase of special books from publishing companies that teach specific skills assessed on the Fourth Grade Ohio Proficiency Test

Goal IV: Cranwood will reduce student conflict.
Cranwood staff will help build student self-esteem.
Cranwood will establish a multicultural program by year 2000.

Strategies:

- Conflict Mediation taught to team of students
- system for students to make announcements and read self-created stories and poems — needed for boosting self-esteem
- Student Council established
- Skills for Life/Megaskills taught

Goal V: Cranwood will establish a unique educational program that will reach all students and foster their creativity, comprehension, and maximum growth.

Strategies:

- multi-age classrooms combined with looping, team teaching, and departmentalization
- thematic approach to teaching — schoolwide themes, grade-level themes
- Cranwood working together with feeder middle schools
- City Year used a teaching support
- creating new report card based on the theory of multiple intelligences and intrinsic motivation as its foundation
- parental involvement during the school day and helping children with assignments at home
- Megaskills and Skills for Life taught
- Extended-Day Program
- Intervention Based Assessment Team

TRANSFORMING LEARNING COMMUNITIES SITES

CRANWOOD LEARNING ACADEMY
Cleveland City Schools
Cleveland State University

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

1 **Brentmoor Elementary School**
Mentor Exempted Village Schools
Cleveland State University

2 **Cranwood Learning Academy**
Cleveland City Schools
Cleveland State University

3 **Dawson-Bryant Elementary School**
Dawson-Bryant Local Schools
(Lawrence County)
Ohio University

4 **Lomond Elementary School**
Shaker Heights City Schools
Cleveland State University

5 **Miami East North Elementary School**
Miami East Local Schools
(Miami County)
Miami University

MIDDLE SCHOOLS

6 **East Muskingum Middle School**
East Muskingum Local Schools
(Muskingum County)
Muskingum College
Ohio University

7 **Galion Middle School**
Galion City Schools
The Ohio State University

8 **Talawanda Middle School**
Talawanda City Schools
Miami University

SECONDARY SCHOOLS

9 **Federal Hocking High School**
Federal Hocking Local Schools
(Athens County)
Ohio University

10 **Franklin Heights High School**
South-Western City Schools
The Ohio State University

11 **Reynoldsburg High School**
Reynoldsburg City Schools
The Ohio State University

12 **Robert A. Taft High School**
Cincinnati City Schools
Miami University

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